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ABSTRACT

This report is the 13th in a series that focuses on high school dropout and completion rates, presenting data on 2000 rates and including time series data on high school dropout and completion rates for 1972-00. In addition to extending time series data reported in earlier years, this report examines the characteristics of high school dropouts and high school completers in 2000. It shows that while progress was made during the 1970s and 1980s in reducing high school dropout rates and increasing high school completion rates, these rates remained comparatively stable during the 1990s. Data are presented on event and status dropout rates and high school completion rates, with statistics on income, race/ethnicity, age and sex, and region and state. Overall, in October 2000, 5 out of every 100 youths enrolled in high school in October 1999 had dropped out. They accounted for approximately one-half million of the 10 million people age 15-14 years enrolled in high school in the previous October. Four appendices, which comprise half of the report, feature standard error tables for text tables, tables in support of figures, supplemental tables, and technical notes. (Contains 27 tables and 6 figures.) (SM)

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Statistical Analysis Report November 2001

Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the 13th in a series of National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports on high school dropout and completion rates. It presents data on rates in 2000, the most recent year for which data are available, and includes time series data on high school dropout and completion rates for the period 1972 through 2000. In addition to extending time series data reported in earlier years, this report examines the characteristics of high school dropouts and high school completers in 2000. It shows that while progress was made during the 1970s and 1980s in reducing high school dropout rates and increasing high school completion rates, these rates have remained comparatively stable during the 1990s.

Event Dropout Rates

Event dropout rates for 2000 describe the proportion of youth ages 15 through 24 who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the 12 months preceding October 2000. Demographic data collected in the Current Population Survey (CPS) permit event dropout rates to be calculated across various individual characteristics, including race/ethnicity, sex, region of residence, and income level.

- Five out of every 100 young adults enrolled in high school in October 1999 left school before October 2000 without successfully completing a high school program. The percentage of young adults who left school each year without successfully completing a high school program decreased from 1972 through 1987. Despite year-to-year fluctuations, the percentage of students dropping out of school each year has stayed relatively unchanged since 1987 (table A and figure A).

Table A.—Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year, percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts, and percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who had completed high school, by race/ethnicity: October 2000

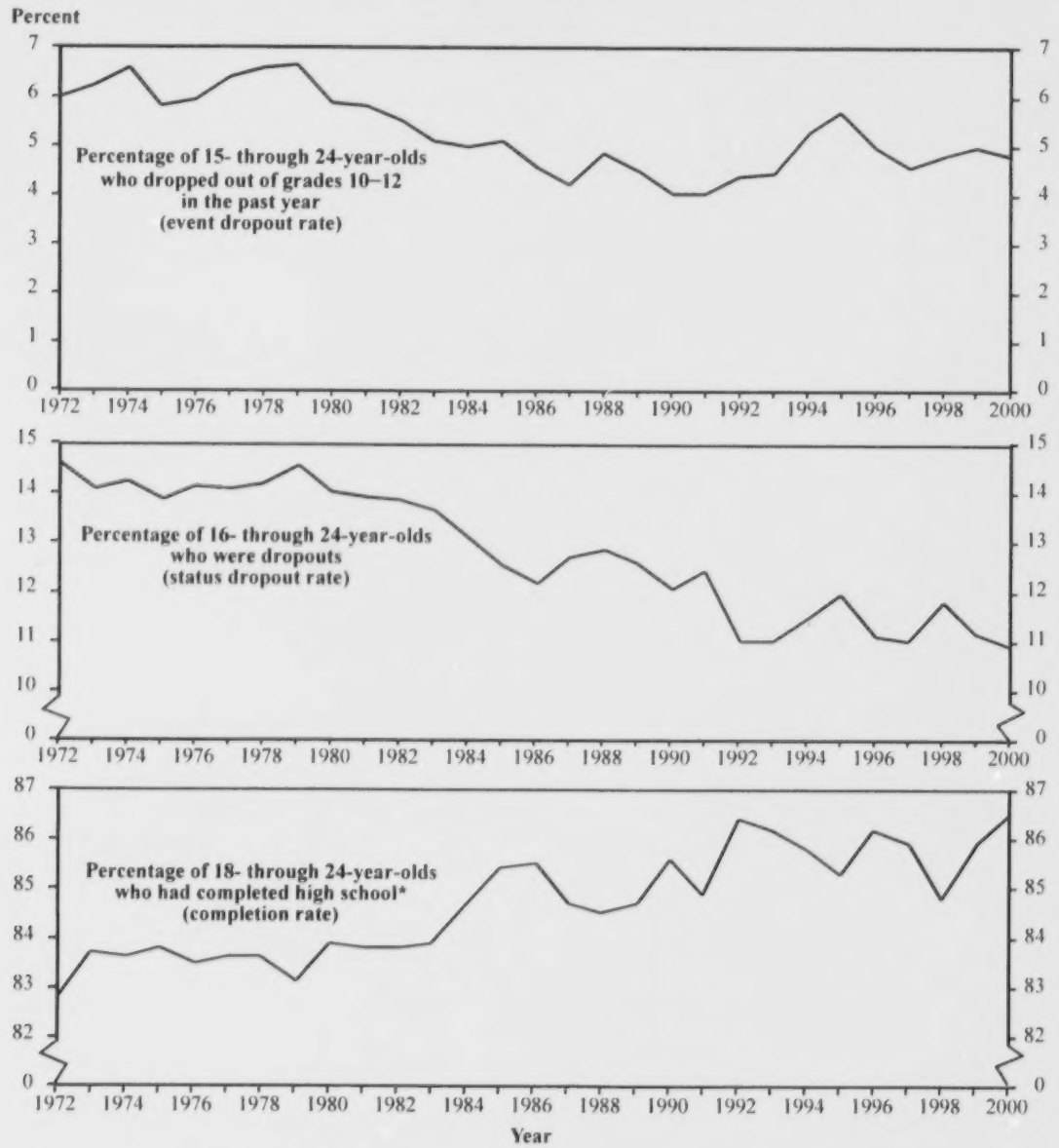
Dropout and completion measures	Total[1]	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander
Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, October 1999 to October 2000	4.8	4.1	6.1	7.4	3.5
Percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts in 2000	10.9	6.9	13.1	27.8	3.8
Percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who were high school completers in 2000[2]	86.5	91.8	83.7	64.1	94.6

[1]Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives are included in the total but are not shown separately.

[2]Excludes those still enrolled in high school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2000.

Figure A.—Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year, percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts, and percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who had completed high school: October 1972 through October 2000


Percent
Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year (event dropout rate)
Percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts (status dropout rate)
Percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who had completed high school* (completion rate)
Year

*Excludes those still enrolled in high school.

NOTE: Data for years 1987 through 2000 reflect new editing procedures instituted by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Data for years 1992 through 2000 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. Data for years 1994 through 2000 reflect changes in the CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in population controls used in the 1990 census-based estimates, with adjustment for undercounting in the 1990 census. See appendix D for a description of the impact of these changes on rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

- In 2000, young adults living in families with incomes in the lowest 20 percent of all family incomes were six times as likely as their peers from families in the top 20 percent of the income distribution to drop out of high school (table 1).

- In 2000, about three-fourths (75.8 percent) of the current-year dropouts were ages 15 through 18; moreover, about two-fifths (42.0 percent) of the dropouts were ages 15 through 17 (table 1).

Status Dropout Rates

Over the last decade, between 347,000 and 544,000 10th- through 12th-grade students left school each year without successfully completing a high school program (table C1). Status dropout rates represent the proportion of young people ages 16 through 24 who are out of school and who have not earned a high school credential. Status rates are higher than event rates because they include all dropouts in this age range, regardless of when they last attended school.

- In October 2000, some 3.8 million young adults were not enrolled in a high school program and had not completed high school. These youths accounted for 10.9 percent of the 34.6 million 16- through 24-year-olds in the United States in 2000 (table A, figure A, and table 3). As noted with event rates, status rates declined from the early 1970s into the late 1980s, but since then have remained stable (figure 2 and table B5).

- The status dropout rate for Whites in 2000 remained lower than the rate for Blacks, but over the past three decades, the difference between the rates for Whites and Blacks has narrowed (figure 2). However, this narrowing of the gap occurred during the 1970s and 1980s. Since 1990, the gap has remained fairly constant. In addition, Hispanic young adults in the United States continued to have a relatively high status dropout rate when compared to Asian/Pacific Islanders, Whites, or Blacks (table A and table 3).

- In 2000, the status dropout rate for Asian/Pacific Islander young adults was lower than for young adults from all other racial/ethnic groups. The status rate for Asian/Pacific Islanders was 3.8 percent compared with 27.8 percent for Hispanics, 13.1 percent for Blacks, and 6.9 percent for Whites (table 3).

- In 2000, 44.2 percent of Hispanic young adults born outside of the United States were high school dropouts. Hispanic young adults born within the United States were much less likely to be dropouts. However, when looking at just those young adults born within the United States, Hispanic youths were still more likely to be dropouts than other young adults (table 3).

High School Completion Rates

High school completion rates represent the proportion of 18- through 24-year-olds, not currently enrolled in high school or below, who have completed a high school diploma or an equivalent credential, including a General Educational Development (GED) credential.

- In 2000, 86.5 percent of all 18- through 24-year-olds not enrolled in high school had completed high school. Completion rates rose slightly from the early 1970s to the late 1980s, but have remained fairly constant during the 1990s (figure A and table B7).

- High school completion rates increased for White and Black young adults between the early 1970s and late 1980s, but have remained relatively constant in the 1990s. By 2000, 91.8 percent of White and 83.7 percent of Black 18- through 24-year-olds had completed high school (table A, figure 3, table 4, and table B7).

- White and Asian/Pacific Islander young adults in 2000 were more likely than their Black and Hispanic peers to have completed high school (table A and table 4).

FOREWORD

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collects and publishes information on the condition of education in the United States. Under mandate from the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100–297), NCES released the first annual report on school dropouts in 1989. Although law no longer requires the reporting of dropout statistics, this report has been continued because of the importance of charting dropout behavior among America's youth.

Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000 is the thirteenth in the series of annual dropout reports from NCES. The current report presents data for 2000 on high school dropout rates, and examines high school completion rates. In addition to extending time series data reported in earlier years, this report focuses on the characteristics of high school dropouts and high school completers in 2000.

The report is based on the best and most current national data available at this time. It utilizes the data from the Current Population Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau to develop national event and status dropout rates for young adults of various ages. As a part of an ongoing effort to expand and improve data collected about dropouts, NCES initiated a dropout statistics collection in the 1991–92 school year as a component of the Common Core of Data; data from the eighth year of that collection are included in this report for most states. Current Population Survey data are also used to develop national and state-specific high school completion rates.

I hope the information in this report will be useful in discussions about this critical national issue.

Gary W. Phillips
Acting Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many individuals made substantial contributions to the preparation of this report. This report was prepared under the direction of Val Plisko, Associate Commissioner for the Early Childhood, International and Crosscutting Studies Division, NCES.

This report builds on the early reports developed by Mary Frase and then Marilyn McMillen and reflects their dedication to producing accurate and useful information on high school dropouts and completers.

Without the efforts of Beth Young and other staff who work on the Common Core of Data (CCD) collection at NCES, the CCD dropout data collection would not continue to expand; we thank them for their hard work. We would also like to extend our gratitude to Lisa Richards Hone and the American Council on Education for supplying data on General Educational Development (GED) test-takers and certificates issued, and to Jennifer Sable at the Education Statistics Services Institute (ESSI) without whom the timely release of this report would not have been possible. Amie Jamieson from the U.S. Census Bureau also deserves special mention for her efforts to assure the timely release of the Current Population Survey (CPS).

Without the assistance of Barbara Kridl and Francesca Tussing of MPR Associates, this report could not have been prepared. They provided invaluable editorial, graphic, and production assistance.

The report was reviewed by Shelley Burns, John Wirt, Beth Young, Kathryn Chandler, Val Plisko, and Bruce Taylor from NCES; and Mary Frase from the National Science Foundation. Their efforts and contributions are greatly appreciated. Any remaining flaws are the sole responsibility of the authors.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past 50 years, the value of a high school education has changed dramatically. During the 1950s, a high school degree was considered a valued asset in the labor market, and through the 1970s, a high school diploma continued to open doors to many promising career opportunities. In recent years, however, advances in technology have fueled the demand for a highly skilled labor force, transforming a high school education into a minimum requirement for entry into the labor market.

Because high school completion has become a requirement for accessing additional education, training, or the labor force, the economic consequences of leaving high school without a diploma are severe. On average, dropouts are more likely to be unemployed than high school graduates and to earn less money when they eventually secure work.[1] High school dropouts are also more likely to receive public assistance than high school graduates who do not go on to college.[2] This increased reliance on public assistance is likely due, at least in part, to the fact that young women who drop out of school are more likely to have children at younger ages and more likely to be single parents than high school graduates.[3] The individual stresses and frustrations associated with dropping out have social implications as well: dropouts make up a disproportionate percentage of the nation's prison and death row inmates.[4]

Secondary schools in today's society are faced with the challenge of increasing curricular rigor to strengthen the knowledge base of high school graduates, while at the same time increasing the proportion of all students who successfully complete a high school program. Monitoring high school dropout and completion rates provides one measure of progress toward meeting these goals.

This is the thirteenth annual dropout report from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). This report spans the 29-year time period from 1972 through 2000 and focuses primarily on updates to annual time series data. Data from the October 2000 Current Population Survey (CPS) of the U.S. Census Bureau are used to compute national high school dropout and completion rates and rates by background characteristics, such as sex, race/ethnicity, family income, and region of the country. State-level data from the CPS are used to produce estimates of high school completion rates by state. In addition, NCES data from the Common Core of Data (CCD) are used to provide estimates of dropout rates by state for most states.

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[1]For employment data, see U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 1999*, NCES 99-022 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999), Indicator 11. For income data, see U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 2001*, NCES 2001-072 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2001), Indicator 18.

[2]U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 1998*, NCES 98-013 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998), Indicator 34.

[3]U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1994*, NCES 96-863, by M. McMillen and P. Kaufman (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996).

[4]Estimates indicate that approximately 30 percent of federal and 40 percent of state prison inmates are high school dropouts. See U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 1997*, NCJ-177613 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000).

EVENT AND STATUS DROPOUT RATES

Event, status, and cohort dropout rates each provide a different perspective on the student dropout population. The National Center for Education Statistics presents definitions and data for all three types of dropout rates in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the dropout problem in the United States. High school completion rates conclude the profile of high school outcomes for young adults in the United States.

Types of Dropout Rates

- **Event** rates describe the proportion of students in a given age range who leave school each year without completing a high school program. In this report, the event rate measures young adults ages 15 through 24 who dropped out during the school year preceding the data collection. This annual measure of recent dropout occurrences provides important information about how effective educators are in keeping students enrolled in school.

- **Status** rates provide cumulative data on dropouts among all young adults within a specified age range. Status rates are higher than event rates because they include all dropouts in a given age range, regardless of when they last attended school. In this report, the status rate measures young adults ages 16 through 24 who are not enrolled in school and who have not completed a high school diploma or obtained an equivalency certificate. Since status rates reveal the extent of the dropout problem in the population, these rates also can be used to estimate the need for further education and training designed to help dropouts participate fully in the economy and life of the nation.

- **Cohort** rates measure what happens to a group of students over a period of time. These rates are based on repeated measures of a cohort of students with shared experiences and reveal how many students starting in a specific grade drop out over time. Typically, data from longitudinal studies provide more background and contextual information on the students who drop out than are available through the CPS or CCD data collections.[5]

[5]Cohort data are available only sporadically and are not presented in this year's report. The most recent information available is from the August 1994 Third Follow-up of the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, which contains data on a cohort of the 8th-grade class of 1988. These data were previously reported in U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1998*, NCES 2000–022, by P. Kaufman, J. Kwon, and S. Klein (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999). The next available cohort data will be data from the Fourth Follow-up to the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988. These data will follow up dropouts from the 8th-grade class of 1988, 8 years after their scheduled high school graduation. Results from the Fourth Follow-up are expected to be published in the 2001 annual dropout report.

Event Dropout Rates

Event rates calculated using the October 2000 CPS data measure the proportion of students who dropped out between October 1999 and October 2000.[6] These dropouts are 15- through 24-year-olds who were enrolled in high school in October 1999, but had not completed high school and were not enrolled in grades 10–12 a year later. According to this definition, a young person could complete high school by either earning a high school diploma or receiving an alternative credential such as a GED. In October 2000, 5 out of every 100 young adults (4.8 percent) who were enrolled in high school in October 1999 were no longer in school and had not successfully completed a high school program (table 1).[7]

[6]Specifically, the numerator of the event rate for 2000 is the number of persons 15 through 24 years old surveyed in 2000 who were enrolled in high school in October 1999, were not enrolled in October 2000, and also did not complete high school (i.e., had not received a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate) between October 1999 and October 2000. The denominator of the event rate is the sum of the dropouts (i.e., the numerator) and the number of all persons 15 through 24 years old who attended grades 10–12 in 1999 and were still enrolled in 2000 or had graduated or completed high school.

[7]Standard errors for all tables and figures are provided in appendixes A and B.

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Table 1.—Event dropout rates and number and distribution of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by background characteristics: October 2000

Characteristic	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population enrolled
Total	4.8	488	10,126	100.0	100.0
Sex					
Male	5.5	280	5,087	57.4	50.2
Female	4.1	208	5,039	42.6	49.8
Race/ethnicity[1]					
White, non-Hispanic	4.1	276	6,786	56.6	67.0
Black, non-Hispanic	6.1	91	1,510	18.6	14.9
Hispanic	7.4	100	1,351	20.5	13.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.5	13	379	2.7	3.7
Family income[2]					
Low income	10.0	141	1,408	28.9	13.9
Middle income	5.2	298	5,728	61.1	56.6
High income	1.6	48	2,990	9.9	29.5
Age[3]					
15–16	2.9	84	2,924	17.2	28.9
17	3.5	121	3,452	24.8	34.1
18	6.1	165	2,721	33.8	26.9
19	9.6	70	724	14.3	7.1
20–24	16.1	49	305	10.0	3.0
Region					
Northeast	3.9	73	1,849	15.0	18.3
Midwest	4.4	109	2,481	22.3	24.5
South	6.2	220	3,543	45.1	35.0
West	3.8	86	2,253	17.6	22.2

[1]Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives are included in the total but are not shown separately.

[2]Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 2000; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes. See appendix D of this report for a full definition of family income.

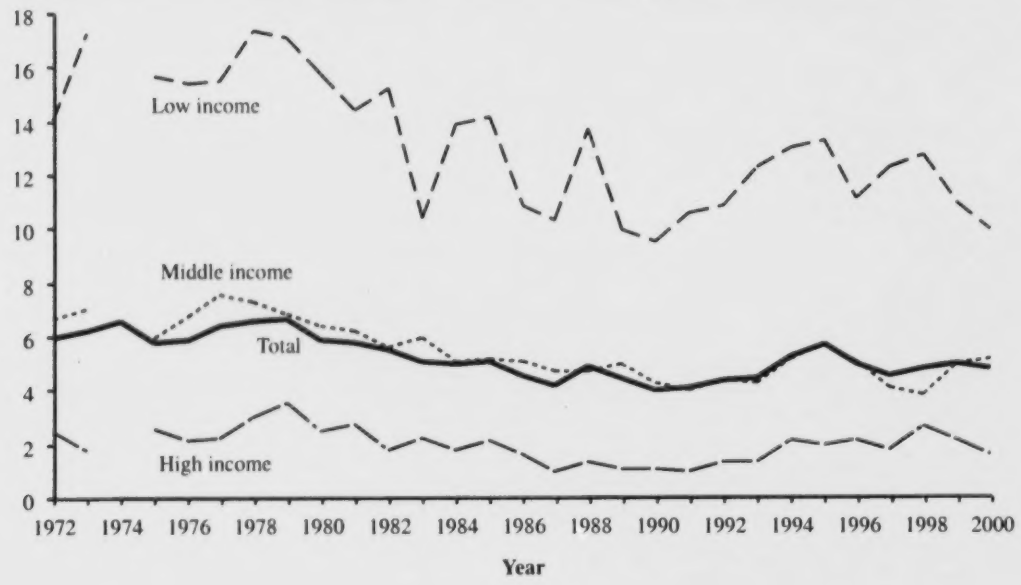
[3]Age when a person dropped out may be 1 year younger, because the dropout event could occur at any time over a 12-month period.

NOTE: Because of rounding, detail may not add to totals.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2000.

Over the past three decades, annual estimates of the event dropout rate have fluctuated between 4.0 and 6.7 percent (figure 1 and table B3). However, overall there has been a downward trend in event dropout rates, from 6.1 percent in 1972 to 4.8 percent in 2000.[8] The percentage of young adults who left school each year without successfully completing a high school program decreased from 1972 through 1987. Despite year-to-year fluctuations, the percentage of students dropping out of school each year has stayed relatively unchanged since 1987. Changes in data collection and estimation procedures coincided with an increase in the rates from 1991 through 1995

Figure 1.—Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income:* October 1972 through October 2000



*Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for the year; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes. See appendix D of this report for a full definition of family income.

NOTE: Data on family income are missing for 1974. Numbers for years 1987 through 2000 reflect new editing procedures instituted by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Numbers for years 1992 through 2000 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. Numbers for years 1994 through 2000 reflect changes in the CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for discussions of changes to the CPS implemented in 1987, 1992, and 1994.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

[8]All changes or differences noted in this report are statistically significant at the ≤ 0.05 level. The statistical significance of these comparisons was assessed with Student's *t*-test with a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. Time trends noted in this report were assessed using weighted least squares regressions. For a full discussion of the statistical methods used in this report, see appendix D.

(see appendix D). Nevertheless, over the period from 1991 through 2000, there was no consistent upward or downward trend in event rates.

Income

The CPS includes family income data that can be used to provide information about how socioeconomic background is related to the decisions of youth to drop out of school. Of course, the range of factors that may affect the life decisions of youth extend beyond the economic conditions associated with family income; however, in the absence of additional measures, family income serves as a good indicator for the other social and economic factors that are likely to be related to a youth's decision to stay in school.[9]

In 2000, young adults living in families with incomes in the lowest 20 percent of all family incomes were six times as likely as their peers from families in the top 20 percent of the income distribution to drop out of high school. Ten percent of students from families in the lowest 20 percent of the income distribution dropped out of high school; by way of comparison, 5.2 percent in the middle 60 percent of the income distribution dropped out, as did 1.6 percent of students from families with incomes in the top 20 percent (table 1).

Most of the declines in dropout rates for all income groups occurred in the 1970s and 1980s (figure 1 and table B3). Since 1990, event dropout rates for all income groups have stabilized. For example, since 1990, event dropout rates for low-income youth have fluctuated between 9.5 and 13.3 percent. Event rates for young adults living in middle- and high-income families have also shown no upward or downward trend since 1990, with rates fluctuating between 3.8 and 5.7 percent, and 1.0 and 2.7 percent, respectively.

Income is only one of a number of closely linked background factors that may be related to a student's decision to drop out of school; others include race/ethnicity, age, sex, school and community factors, and geographic region of residence. Analyses of all the specific interactions among intervening variables that mediate the dropout decision are beyond the scope of this report. Instead, this report reviews some of the primary factors that are associated with higher event dropout rates.[10]

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[9]The variable used to assess family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent in the October CPS. In some cases, a 15- through 24-year-old is unrelated to the household head or is the head of the household (or spouse/companion of the head). Because family income for a 15- through 24-year-old is defined as the current household income of the family of the household respondent, reported incomes may not reflect the family background of all youth. See appendix D for a more detailed discussion.

[10]For coverage on the interaction of race/ethnicity with other factors, the interested reader is referred to G. Natriello, ed., *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1987). For an ethnographic depiction of these factors at work, see M. Fine, *Framing Dropouts* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991).

Race/Ethnicity

Past data have shown a strong association between race/ethnicity and the likelihood of dropping out of school. In particular, cohort studies of national longitudinal data for American high school students, such as the High School and Beyond study sponsored by NCES, show that Hispanics and Blacks are at greater risk of dropping out than Whites.[11] Other analyses of data from the NCES National Education Longitudinal Study and analyses reported by the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans also confirm these patterns.[12]

However, data from the October 2000 CPS show no significant differences in event dropout rates among any of the race/ethnicity categories (table 1). The event dropout rate for Hispanic students in 2000 was 7.4 percent, for Blacks 6.1 percent, for Whites 4.1 percent, and for Asians/Pacific Islanders 3.5 percent.[13] (While some of these differences appear to be proportionally large, none are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, due to relatively large standard errors.)[14] Similar comparisons using 1999, 1998, and 1997 CPS data have found some differences, with Hispanic students being at greater risk of dropping out.

Age and Sex

Data from the October 2000 CPS show that students who pursue a high school program beyond the traditional ages are at an increased risk of dropping out of school (table 1). Event dropout rates for younger students who were in the typical age range for high school enrollment (ages 15 through 18) were substantially lower than those of older students ages 19 through 24. Specifically, these rates were 2.9 percent for 15- and 16-year-olds, 3.5 percent for 17-year-olds, 6.1 percent for 18-year-olds, 9.6 percent for 19-year-olds, and 16.1 percent for 20- through 24-year-olds. Not only are older students more likely to drop out than younger students, but they also represent a disproportionate number of dropouts in 2000; students who were 19 through 24 accounted for 10.1 percent of students in the 15- through 24-year-old age group but 24.3 percent of the high school dropouts. These findings mirror those reported in previous NCES dropout reports.

About three-quarters (75.8 percent) of the current-year dropouts were ages 15 through 18. About two-fifths (42.0 percent) of all students who left school between

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[11]See R. Ekstrom, M. Goertz, J. Pollack, and D. Rock, "Who Drops Out of High School and Why? Findings from a National Study," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies* (1987), 52–69. For dropout data using the National Education Longitudinal Study, see tables B9 and B10 in U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1994*, NCES 96–863, by M. McMillen and P. Kaufman (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996).

[12]President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, *Our Nation on the Fault Line: Hispanic American Education*, A report to the President of the United States, the Nation, and the Secretary of Education, United States Department of Education, September, 1996.

[13]The racial/ethnic categories used in this report are Black, non-Hispanic; White, non-Hispanic; Hispanic; and Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic). However, for convenience, the labels Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander are used in the report.

[14] The estimates for the dropout rate and number of dropouts among Asians/Pacific Islanders will show large year-to-year fluctuations due to the relatively small sample sizes of 15- through 24-year old Asians/Pacific Islanders in the October CPS.

October 1999 and October 2000 were ages 15, 16, and 17 in October 2000. These youths left school before reaching the typical age of school completion.

The dropout rates for males and females have not tended to differ significantly over the last 29 years (table C3). However, the event dropout rate for male students was somewhat higher than the rate for female students in 2000. Approximately 5.5 percent of males and 4.1 percent of females ages 15 through 24 enrolled in high school in October 1999 had dropped out of school by October 2000 (table 1).

Region and State

In 2000, event dropout rates across the four regions of the country did not show wide variation. The South had an event rate of 6.2 percent, the Midwest had an event rate of 4.4 percent, the Northeast had an event rate of 3.9 percent, and the West had an event rate of 3.8 percent (table 1).

For the past 8 years, the Common Core of Data (CCD) universe collection at NCES has included a dropout component in the agency-level nonfiscal data collection. The number of participating states that report using consistent data definitions and collection procedures has increased from 14 states in the 1991–92 school year to 37 states and the District of Columbia for the 1998–99 school year (table 2).[15] Each year a number of additional states submit data that do not meet the specified definitions and collection procedures. Once all states are participating fully in this data collection, event data for sex, race/ethnicity, and grades 9–12 will be aggregated at the national level.

The state level dropout rates for 1998–99 showed considerable variability ranging from 2.4 percent in North Dakota to 10.0 percent in Louisiana (table 2). In all, there were 3 states with dropout rates of less than 3 percent. Apart from North Dakota, Wisconsin had a dropout rate of 2.6 percent and Iowa had a dropout rate of 2.5 percent.

[15] For event dropout rates by state from the 1991–92 and 1992–93 school years, see U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1993*, NCES 94–669, by M. McMillen and P. Kaufman (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), table 29.

Table 2.—Event dropout rates for grades 9–12, by state: 1993–94 through 1998–99

State	Event dropout rate (percent)					
	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99
Alabama[1]	5.8	6.2	5.6	5.3	4.8	4.4
Alaska[2]	—	—	5.6	4.9	4.6	5.3
Arizona[1]	13.7	9.6	10.2	10.0	9.4	8.4
Arkansas	5.3	4.9	4.1	5.0	5.4	6.0
California	—	—	—	—	—	—
Colorado	—	—	—	—	—	—
Connecticut	4.8	4.9	4.8	3.9	3.5	3.3
Delaware	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.1
District of Columbia	9.5	10.6	—	—	12.8	8.2
Florida	—	—	—	—	—	—
Georgia	8.7	9.0	8.5	8.2	7.3	7.4
Hawaii	—	—	—	—	—	—
Idaho[1]	8.5	9.2	8.0	7.2	6.7	6.9
Illinois[1]	6.8	6.6	6.4	6.6	6.9	6.5
Indiana	—	—	—	—	—	—
Iowa	3.2	3.5	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.5
Kansas	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kentucky	—	—	—	9.4	5.2	4.9
Louisiana[1]	4.7	3.5	11.6	11.6	11.4	10.0
Maine	3.1	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3
Maryland[1]	5.2	5.2	4.8	4.9	4.3	4.4
Massachusetts	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.6
Michigan	—	—	—	—	—	—
Minnesota	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.5	4.9	4.5
Mississippi	6.1	6.4	6.2	6.0	5.8	5.2
Missouri	7.0	7.0	6.5	5.8	5.2	4.8
Montana	—	—	5.6	5.1	4.4	4.5
Nebraska	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.2
Nevada	9.8	10.3	9.6	10.2	10.1	7.9
New Hampshire	—	—	—	—	—	—
New Jersey[1]	4.3	4.0	4.1	3.7	3.5	3.1
New Mexico	8.1	8.5	8.3	7.5	7.1	7.0
New York	—	—	—	—	—	—
North Carolina	—	—	—	—	—	—
North Dakota	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.4
Ohio[2]	4.7	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.1	3.9
Oklahoma[1]	4.6	5.8	5.7	5.9	5.8	5.2
Oregon	7.3	7.1	7.0	—	—	6.5
Pennsylvania	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.8
Rhode Island	4.9	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.9	4.5
South Carolina	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Dakota[1]	5.3	5.3	5.7	4.5	3.1	4.5
Tennessee[1]	4.8	5.0	4.9	5.1	5.0	4.6
Texas	—	—	—	—	—	—
Utah	3.1	3.5	4.4	4.5	5.2	4.7
Vermont[1]	4.8	4.7	5.3	5.0	5.2	4.6
Virginia[1]	4.8	5.2	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.5

Table 2.—Event dropout rates for grades 9–12, by state: 1993–94 through 1998–99—Continued

State	Event dropout rate (percent)					
	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99
Washington	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Virginia	3.8	4.2	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.9
Wisconsin[2]	3.1	2.7	2.4	2.7	2.8	2.6
Wyoming[2]	6.5	6.7	5.7	6.2	6.4	5.2

—Data not available.

[1]States were asked to report on an October through September cycle. However, these states reported on an alternative July through June cycle.

[2]The following states reported data using an alternative calendar in the years indicated: Alaska (1995–96), Ohio (1993–94), Wisconsin (1993-94 through 1997-98), and Wyoming (1993–94).

[3]Effective in the 1995–96 school year, Louisiana changed its dropout data collection from school-level aggregate counts reported to districts to an individual student-record system. The apparent increase in the dropout rate is partly due to the increased ability to track students.

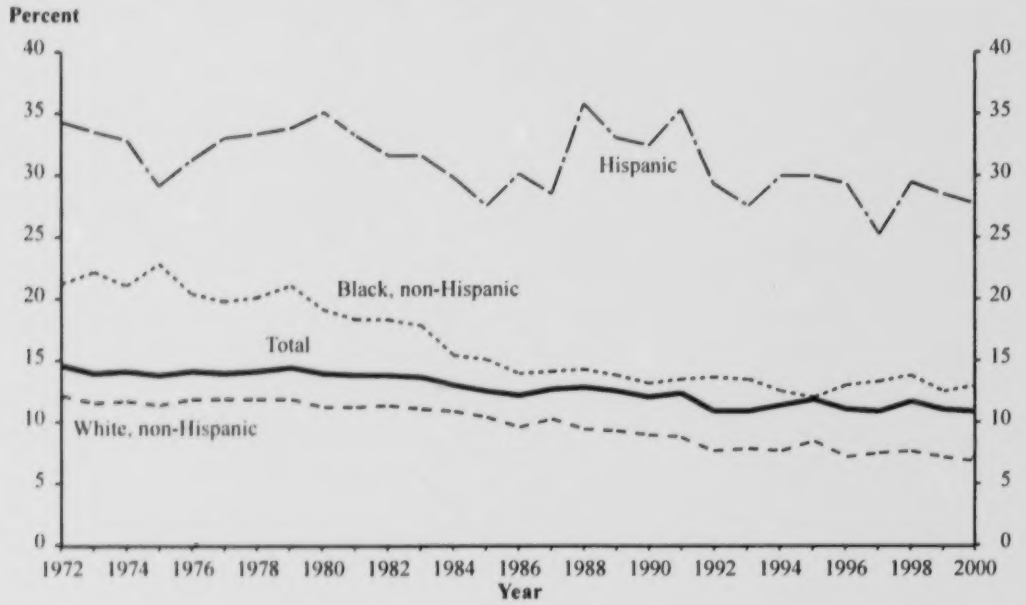
NOTE: Of the 37 states and the District of Columbia that reported dropouts in 1998-99, 27 said that they adhered exactly to the standard definition and collection procedures. See appendix D for a detailed discussion of the CCD dropout definition.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, "Local Education Agency Universe Survey: School Years 1991-92 through 1996-97," "Local Education Agency Universe Dropout File: School Year 1997-98," and "Local Education Agency Universe Dropout File: School Year 1998-99".

Status Dropout Rates

Over the last decade, between 347,000 and 544,000 10th- through 12th-grade students left school each year without successfully completing a high school program. The cumulative effect of these students leaving school each year translates into several million young people who are out of school but lacking a high school credential. Each year over the last decade, this number has exceeded 3 million (table C5). In October 2000, there were 3.8 million 16- through 24-year-olds who were not enrolled in a high school program and had not completed high school (table 3), accounting for about 10.9 percent of the 34.6 million people in this age group. Though there has been a decline in the status dropout rates since the early 1970s, they have remained stable since the late 1980s (figure 2 and table B5). Except where noted, findings presented here are similar to those published in recent NCES annual dropout reports.

Figure 2.—Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2000



NOTE: Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders are included in the total but are not shown separately. In addition, the erratic nature of the Hispanic status rates reflects, in part, the small sample size of Hispanics in the CPS. Numbers for years 1987 through 2000 reflect new editing procedures instituted by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Numbers for years 1992 through 2000 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. Numbers for years 1994 through 2000 reflect changes in the CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table 3.—Status dropout rates and number and distribution of dropouts of 16- through 24-year-olds, by background characteristics: October 2000

Characteristic	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	10.9	3,776	34,568	100.0	100.0
Sex					
Male	12.0	2,082	17,402	55.1	50.3
Female	9.9	1,694	17,166	44.9	49.7
Race/ethnicity[1]					
White, non-Hispanic	6.9	1,564	22,574	41.4	65.3
Black, non-Hispanic	13.1	663	5,058	17.6	14.6
Hispanic	27.8	1,456	5,237	38.6	15.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.8	54	1,417	1.4	4.1
Age					
16	3.9	153	3,887	4.1	11.2
17	7.6	307	4,023	8.1	11.6
18	11.6	468	4,019	12.4	11.6
19	13.5	544	4,026	14.4	11.6
20–24	12.4	2,304	18,613	61.0	53.8
Recency of immigration					
Born outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia					
Hispanic	44.2	1,007	2,282	26.7	6.6
Non-Hispanic	7.4	140	1,907	3.7	5.5
First generation[2]					
Hispanic	14.6	244	1,669	6.5	4.8
Non-Hispanic	4.6	84	1,837	2.2	5.3
Second generation or more[3]					
Hispanic	15.9	205	1,286	5.4	3.7
Non-Hispanic	8.2	2,096	25,586	55.5	74.0
Region					
Northeast	8.5	504	5,945	13.3	17.2
Midwest	9.2	741	8,058	19.6	23.3
South	12.9	1,597	12,337	42.3	35.7
West	11.3	933	8,228	24.7	23.8

[1]Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives are included in the total but are not shown separately.

[2]Individuals defined as "first generation" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, and one or both of their parents were born outside the 50 states or the District of Columbia.

[3]Individuals defined as "second generation or more" were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia, as were both of their parents.

NOTE: Because of rounding, detail may not add to totals.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2000.

Race/Ethnicity

Over the past three decades, the status dropout rates for White young adults have persisted at levels that are lower than the rates observed for either Black or Hispanic young adults (figure 2 and table B5). However, from 1972 to 2000, the percentages of both White and Black young adults who were out of school without a high school credential have declined by nearly 40 percent (in each group). Since the dropout rates for Black young adults have been higher than those for Whites, the comparable rates of change have resulted in a narrowing of the gap between the dropout rates for Blacks and Whites. However, the narrowing of the gap between Blacks and Whites occurred in the 1970 and 1980s. Since 1990, the gap has remained fairly constant.

The percentage of Hispanic young adults who were out of school without a high school credential has remained higher than that of Blacks and Whites in every year throughout this 29-year period. During these years, when immigration patterns contributed to substantial changes in the size and composition of the Hispanic population, the status dropout rates for Hispanic young adults did not decline. Over most of the 29-year period, about 3 of every 10 of the 16- through 24-year-old Hispanics in the United States were reported as out of school and lacking a high school credential (table B5).[16]

Due to relatively small sample sizes, reliable estimates of the status dropout rate for Asians/Pacific Islanders could not be calculated before 1998, so they are not shown separately in the trend lines (figure 2). However, in 2000, Asians/Pacific Islanders, who represented 4.1 percent of the total 16- through 24-year-old population, had a status dropout rate of 3.8 percent, the lowest rate among all racial/ethnic groups (table 3). In comparison, 6.9 percent of White young adults ages 16 through 24 were out of school and without a high school credential in 2000. Even though White young adults were less likely to be status dropouts in 2000 than their Black and Hispanic peers, Whites constituted a large group of status dropouts, accounting for 1.6 million (41.4 percent) of the 3.8 million dropouts.

While Hispanics represented approximately the same proportion of the young adult population as did Blacks (15.1 and 14.6 percent, respectively), Hispanics were disproportionally represented among status dropouts in 2000 (38.6 percent of all dropouts). A total of 1.5 million Hispanics were dropouts in 2000, representing 27.8 percent of all Hispanic young adults in this age group not enrolled in school. In comparison, about 660,000 Black young adults, or 13.1 percent of the total Black population of 16- through 24-year-olds not enrolled in school, were dropouts in the corresponding period. Hispanics at 38.6 percent of all dropouts represented about the same proportion of the dropout population as did Whites (41.4 percent); while Whites made up almost two-thirds of the total population of 16- through 24-year olds.

[16] The erratic nature of the Hispanic status rates reflects, in part, the small sample size of Hispanics in the CPS.

Hispanic Dropout Rates by Immigration Status

High Hispanic dropout rates are partly attributable to relatively greater dropout rates among Hispanic immigrants. Data from the 2000 CPS appear to substantiate earlier findings.[17] In fact, the status dropout rate of 44.2 percent for Hispanic 16- through 24-year-olds born outside the United States was more than double the rate of 14.6 percent for U.S. first-generation Hispanic youth, and the rate of 15.9 percent for second-generation Hispanic youth (table 3).[18] However, when looking at just those young adults born in the United States, Hispanic youths were still more likely to drop out than their counterparts of other race/ethnicities.

Data from 1995 show that more than half (62.5 percent) of the foreign-born Hispanic youths who were "dropouts" had never enrolled in a U.S. school, and 79.8 percent of these young adults who were never enrolled in U.S. schools were reported as either speaking English "not well" or "not at all."[19] Some of the young Hispanic immigrants who did not enroll in school in the United States may have entered the country beyond what is considered "normal" high school age, and some may have come to the United States in search of employment rather than education. However, the data also suggest that language may be a barrier to participation in U.S. schools. Regardless of the reasons, for the large proportion of Hispanic young adults without a high school credential, the impact is the same: whether they were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia or elsewhere and whether or not they enrolled in U.S. schools, these young adults probably do not have the basic level of education thought to be essential in today's economy.

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[17]See, for example, G. Brown, N. Rose, S. Hill, and M. Olivas, *The Condition of Education for Hispanic Americans* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1980); U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, *An Analysis of Language Minority and Limited English Proficient Students from NELS:88*, by F. Bennici and W. Strang (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, August 1995); U.S. Department of Education, *Characteristics of Secondary-School-Age Language Minority and Limited English Proficient Youth*, by W. Strang, M. Winglee, and J. Stunkard (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1990*, NCES 91–053, by P. Kaufman and M. McMillen (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991); and U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1997*, NCES 99–082, by P. Kaufman, S. Klein and M. Frase (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999).

[18]"First generation" youth are defined as being U.S.–born but having at least one parent born outside the United States, while "second generation" means U.S.–born citizens with both parents also U.S.–born. For the sake of simplicity, the terms "foreign born" and "born outside the United States" are used to refer to anyone born outside the 50 states or the District of Columbia, and the term "born in the United States" is used to refer to persons born within the 50 states or the District of Columbia. People born in Puerto Rico or the territories, although U.S. citizens, are grouped with those born in other countries.

[19]See U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1995*, NCES 97–473, by M. McMillen (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), tables 16 and 20. English-speaking ability is based on the reports of a household respondent rather than reports from each individual in the household.

Age and Sex

As might be expected, young adults of high school age (16 or 17) registered among the lowest status dropout rates, presumably because many of these individuals were still enrolled in school and pursuing a high school diploma. Though these younger students represented 22.9 percent of all 16-through 24 year-olds in 2000, they accounted for just 12.2 percent of all dropouts (table 3). Consequently, the numbers of young adults ages 18 through 24 who had not completed a high school education were comparatively higher, comprising 87.8 percent of all dropouts in 2000.

Data on status dropout rates indicate that males were more likely to be status dropouts than females in 2000. Although males and females are relatively equally represented in the population of young adults ages 16–24, males constituted a greater percentage of all status dropouts. In 2000, 55.1 percent of all status dropouts were male, while 44.9 percent were female.

Region

Regional differences that have been evident since the mid-1970s were also found in 2000.[20] In 2000, status dropout rates in the Northeast (8.5 percent) and Midwest (9.2 percent) were significantly lower than dropout rates in the South (12.9 percent) and West (11.3 percent) (table 3). No statistically significant differences were found between status dropout rates of the Midwest and Northeast, or between the status dropout rates of the South and West.

Moreover, the South had a disproportionately large percentage of dropouts in their young adult population, as the region comprised 35.7 percent of all 16- through 24-year-olds, and 42.3 percent of all dropouts in 2000. In contrast, while young adults living in the Midwest made up roughly 23.3 percent of the population ages 16–24 in the United States, 19.6 percent of all dropouts resided in this region. Young dropouts living in the Northeast also represented a smaller proportion of dropouts (13.3 percent) in comparison with the proportion of all young adults living in this region (17.2 percent). The West accounted for about 24.7 percent of all dropouts in this age group, proportionate to its share of the population ages 16–24 (23.8 percent).

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[20]See U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1990*, NCES 91-053, P. Kaufman, M. McMillen, and S. Whitener (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991), table 7. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1995*, NCES 97–473, by M. McMillen (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), table 5. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1999*, NCES 2001-022, by P. Kaufman, J. Kwon, S. Klein, and C. Chapman (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000), table 3.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES

The relative importance of a high school education has changed dramatically over the last half century in the United States. When the grandparents of today's high school students entered adulthood, a high school education was an asset in the labor force, held by about half of the population ages 25 through 29 in 1950.[21] By the early 1970s, when the parents of today's high school students entered the workforce, about 83 to 84 percent of the population ages 18 through 24 who were not enrolled in high school had completed high school (figure 3 and table B7). At that time, a high school education still served as an entryway to a number of promising career paths. Now, three decades later, technological advances in the workplace have increased the demand for a skilled labor force to the point where a high school education serves more as a minimum requirement for entry into the labor force. Completing a high school education is now even more essential in order to access additional education and training for the labor force.

In previous editions of this series of dropout reports, this section on high school completion rates reported not only overall completion rates, but also the method of completion—graduation by diploma or completion by taking an alternative exam such as the General Educational Development (GED) exam. However, examination of changes in the CPS GED items in the October 2000 school enrollment supplement indicates that the GED estimates from CPS for 2000 are not comparable with earlier data. These data are therefore not presented in this report.

High School Completion Rates

The high school completion rate represents the proportion of 18- through 24-year-olds who have left high school and earned a high school diploma or the equivalent, including a General Educational Development credential.[22] Despite the increased importance of a high school education, the high school completion rate for the nation has increased only slightly over the last three decades. Between 1972 and 1985, high school completion rates climbed by 2.6 percentage points (from 82.8 percent in 1972 to 85.4 percent in 1985); since 1985, the rate has shown no consistent trend and has fluctuated between 85 and 87 percent (figure 3 and table B7). This net increase of about 3 percentage points over 29 years represents slow progress toward improving the national high school completion rate.

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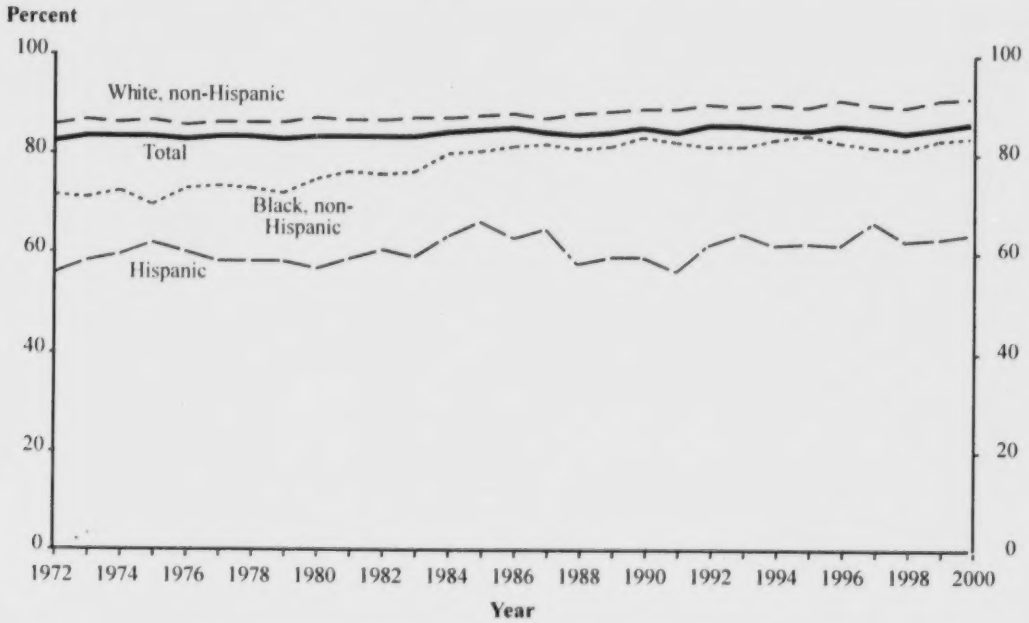
[21]U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 2000*, NCES 2001–034, (table 8) by T. Snyder and C. Hoffman (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2001).

[22]The high school completion rate is based on the population of young adults ages 18 through 24 who are no longer enrolled in high school or below; the status dropout rate is based on the population ages 16 through 24. Thus, the age range of the status dropout rate is 2 years wider, and those 18- through 24-year-olds who are still enrolled in a high school program are excluded from the calculation of the high school completion rate. Because of these differences, the status dropout rate and the high school completion rate are not the simple inverse of each other.

Figure 3.—High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2000



NOTE: Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders are included in the total but are not shown separately. Numbers for years 1987 through 2000 reflect new editing procedures instituted by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. Numbers for years 1992 through 2000 reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. Numbers for years 1994 through 2000 reflect changes in the CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Race/Ethnicity

Trends in high school completion rates for each racial/ethnic group have been fairly similar over the past 29 years (figure 3 and table B7). Whites exhibited a positive trend in their high school completion over the last three decades, although rates have stabilized somewhat in the last decade. Specifically, high school completion rates for White students climbed from about 86 percent in the early 1970s to about 90 percent in 1990. Since 1990, White completion rates have remained stable at 90–92 percent. In 2000, the high school completion rate was 91.8 percent for White young adults.

Black young adults also made significant gains in completing high school over the last three decades as their completion rate rose from 72.1 percent in 1972 to 83.2 percent in 1990. In addition, the gap between Black and White completion rates narrowed in the 1970 and 1980s. However, like White rates, Black completion rates appear to have stabilized in recent years and the gap between the two racial/ethnic groups has thus also stabilized (figure 3 and table B7). In 2000, the Black completion rate was 83.7 percent.

A relatively low percentage of Hispanic young adults complete high school programs. For example, in 2000, 64.1 percent of all Hispanic 18- through 24-year-olds had completed secondary schooling. This compares with 91.8 percent of White, 83.7 percent of Black, and 94.6 percent of Asian young adults.

Though the 2000 rate for Hispanics was significantly higher than the completion rate in 1972 (56.2 percent), overall, completion rates for Hispanics have fluctuated over the last three decades and have shown no consistent trend over the entire period. For example, completion rates for Hispanics increased between 1980 and 1985, and then remained at the same level between 1985 and 2000. Furthermore, the 2000 completion rate of 64.1 percent was not significantly different from the 1985 rate of 66.6 percent.

As mentioned earlier, this is the third year in which Asians/Pacific Islanders were included as a distinct group among racial/ethnic categories. Asian young adults were more likely than their Black and Hispanic peers to complete high school (table 4). In 2000, 94.6 percent of Asian young adults ages 18 through 24 had completed high school, compared with 83.7 percent of Black and 64.1 percent of Hispanic young adults. White young adults also completed high school at a higher rate than both Black and Hispanic young adults and at roughly the same rate as Asians.

Table 4.—High school completion rates, and number and distribution of completers ages 18–24 not currently enrolled in high school or below, by background characteristics: October 2000

Characteristic	Completion rate	Population (thousands)	Number of completers (thousands)	Percent of all completers
Total	86.5	25,138	21,743	100.0
Sex				
Male	84.9	12,460	10,580	48.7
Female	88.1	12,678	11,164	51.3
Race/ethnicity*				
White, non-Hispanic	91.8	16,502	15,145	69.7
Black, non-Hispanic	83.7	3,582	2,999	13.8
Hispanic	64.1	3,797	2,433	11.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	94.6	1,074	1,016	4.7
Age				
18–19	84.0	6,718	5,645	26.0
20–21	86.4	7,363	6,359	29.2
22–24	88.1	11,057	9,739	44.8
Region				
Northeast	89.1	4,265	3,799	17.5
Midwest	88.9	5,861	5,209	24.0
South	84.4	8,895	7,506	34.5
West	85.5	6,117	5,230	24.1

*Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives are included in the total but are not shown separately.

NOTE: Because of rounding, detail may not add to totals.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2000.

Age and Sex

Young adults ages 18–19 who were no longer enrolled in high school were less likely than those ages 22–24 to have completed high school. In 2000, 84.0 percent of 18- and 19-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school had completed their secondary schooling, compared with 88.1 percent of young adults ages 22–24 (table 4).

As might be expected given their lower status dropout rates, females ages 18–24 who were no longer enrolled in high school were more likely to have completed high school than their male peers. In 2000, 88.1 percent of female young adults had completed high school compared with about 84.9 percent of male young adults.

Region and State

Consistent with findings for status dropout rates by region, young adults in the Northeast and Midwest had higher completion rates than their contemporaries living in the South and West (table 4). Approximately 89 percent of young adults in the Northeast and Midwest had completed high school compared with 84.4 percent in the South and 85.5 percent in the West.

Interest in geographic comparisons often extends beyond the regional level to state-specific data. In order to compare high school completion on a state-by-state basis, completion rates are computed based on data spanning a 3-year period.[23] The 1998-2000 averages show considerable state-by-state variation (figure 4 and table B9). The 1998-2000 national completion rate was 85.7 percent, with the average completion rates ranging from 73.5 percent in Arizona to 94.5 percent in Maine.

However, even with aggregating across three years of data, the standard errors for the state estimates are quite large, so large that state-to-state comparisons are difficult. Figure 4 includes error bars (representing the 95 percent confidence level) along with point estimates for the state completion rates. For example, in the first line in the figure, Arizona's completion rate is represented by the symbol |—•—|. The • represents the estimate of the three-year average completion rate for Arizona (73.5 percent). The error bars surrounding the • represent the 95 percent confidence interval around that estimate. Therefore, with a probability of 95 percent, Arizona's completion rate lies somewhere between 70.1 percent (the lower bound) and 76.9 percent (the upper bound). As one can see from this figure, the confidence intervals for most states' completion rates overlap, making many distinctions among states' completion rates unreliable. For example, the difference between Mississippi's completion rate (82.3 percent) and Nebraska's rate (91.3 percent) is not statistically significant.[24]

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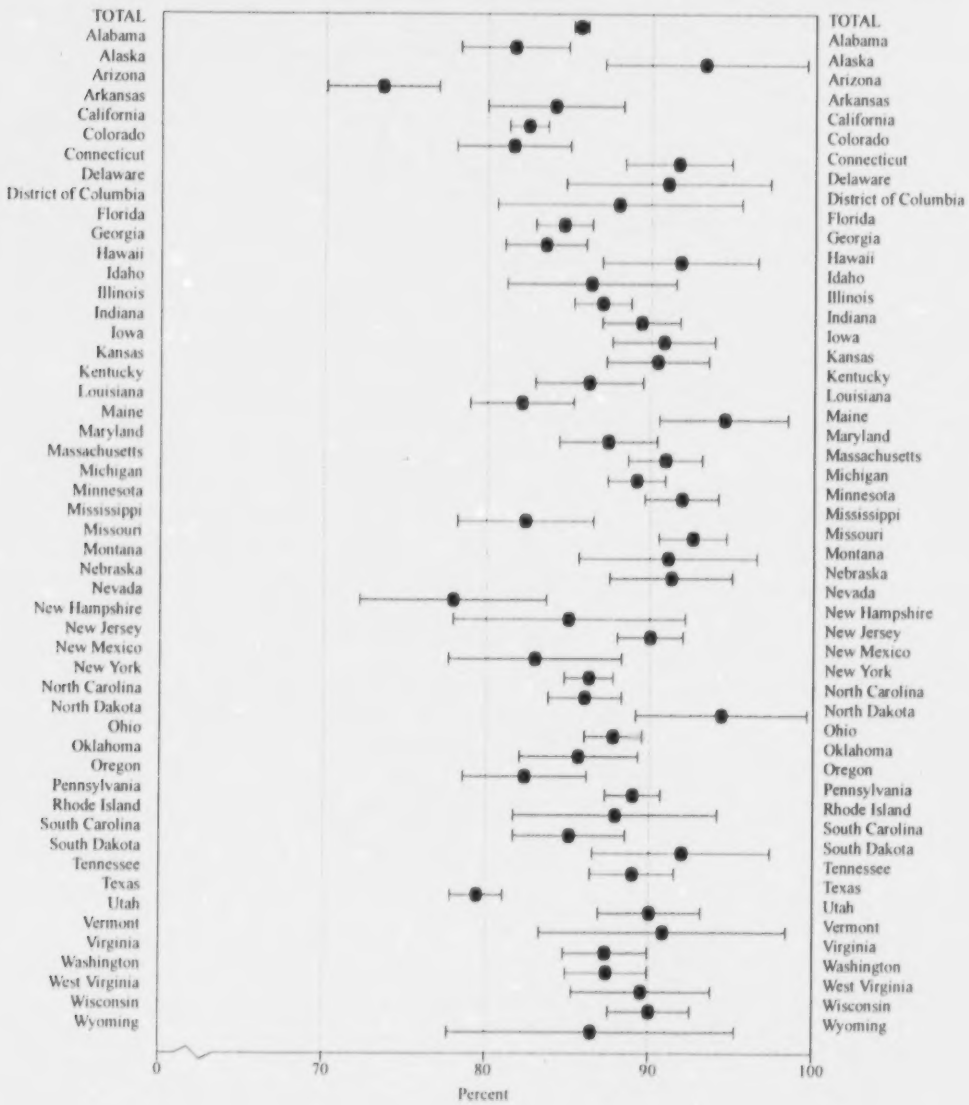
[23] The sample sizes of the numbers of completers at the state level in the CPS are, by definition, substantially smaller than the counts of completers supporting the national estimates (but appreciably larger than the counts of dropouts). To improve the stability of the state-level estimates for high school completion rates, the rates are displayed as 3-year averages (for example, the data for 1998–2000 are based on averages of data from 1998, 1999, and 2000). Even given this situation, sampling variability is increased substantially, especially in states with relatively smaller populations in the 18–24 age range. Thus, it is not surprising that the rates for some states fluctuate over the 3-year periods.

[24] Readers should keep in mind that some of the young adults counted in completion rates may not have attended high school in the state in which they currently reside. For example, states with a large number of out-of-state college students will have high completion rates that may have little to do with their secondary education system. Likewise, states with large numbers of migrant workers who never attended school in that state (or even in this country) may have low completion rates that are also partially unrelated to the performance of their secondary education system.

Figure 4.—High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1998–2000



NOTE: The •s in this table correspond to estimates of 3-year averages, and the horizontal bars show the 95 percent confidence intervals for these means.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 1998, 1999, and 2000.

CONCLUSIONS

In October 2000, 5 out of every 100 youths (4.8 percent) enrolled in high school in October 1999 had left high school without successfully completing a high school program. In total, these dropouts accounted for approximately one-half million of the 10 million 15- through 24-year-olds enrolled in high school in the previous October (1999). These numbers have not changed appreciably in recent years.

The cumulative effect of hundreds of thousands of youths leaving school each year short of finishing a high school program translates into several million young people who are out of school, yet lack a high school credential. In 2000, there were 3.8 million 16- through 24-year-olds who, although not enrolled in school, had not yet completed a high school program. Overall, 10.9 percent of the 34.6 million 16- through 24-year-olds in the United States were dropouts. Although there have been year-to-year fluctuations in this rate, over the past 29 years dropout rates have gradually decreased in a pattern with an average annual decline of 0.1 percentage points per year.

The goal of reducing the dropout rate is to increase the percentage of youths who complete a high school education. Despite the increased importance of a high school education for entry to postsecondary education and the labor market, the high school completion rate has shown limited gains over the last three decades and has been stable throughout the 1990s.

APPENDIX A

Standard Error Tables for Text Tables

Table A1.—Standard errors for table A: Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year, percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts, and percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who had completed high school, by race/ethnicity: October 2000

Dropout and completion measures	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander
Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, October 1999 to October 2000	0.33	0.37	1.01	1.24	1.45
Percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts in 2000	0.26	0.26	0.78	1.08	0.78
Percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who were high school completers in 2000	0.33	0.33	1.01	1.36	1.06

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2000.

Table A2.—Standard errors for table 1: Event dropout rates and number and distribution of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by background characteristics: October 2000

Characteristic	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of event dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population enrolled
Total	0.33	33	133	†	†
Sex					
Male	0.49	25	94	3.45	0.76
Female	0.43	22	94	3.45	0.76
Race/ethnicity					
White, non-Hispanic	0.37	25	108	3.45	0.72
Black, non-Hispanic	1.01	15	55	2.89	0.58
Hispanic	1.24	17	56	3.19	0.59
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.45	5	26	1.12	0.29
Family income					
Low Income	1.23	17	52	3.16	0.53
Middle Income	0.45	26	101	3.40	0.76
High Income	0.35	11	69	2.08	0.70
Age					
15–16	0.48	14	66	2.63	0.69
17	0.48	17	34	3.01	0.73
18	0.71	19	46	3.30	0.68
19	1.69	12	38	2.44	0.39
20–24	3.24	10	27	2.09	0.26
Region					
Northeast	0.69	13	56	2.49	0.59
Midwest	0.63	16	65	2.90	0.66
South	0.62	22	79	3.47	0.73
West	0.62	14	63	2.65	0.64

†Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2000.

Table A3.—Standard errors for table 3: Status dropout rates and number and distribution of dropouts of 16- through 24-year-olds, by background characteristics: October 2000

Characteristic	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.26	89	†	†
Sex				
Male	0.38	66	1.25	0.41
Female	0.35	60	1.25	0.41
Race/ethnicity				
White, non-Hispanic	0.26	59	1.23	0.41
Black, non-Hispanic	0.78	39	1.01	0.33
Hispanic	1.08	57	1.38	0.46
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.78	11	0.30	0.10
Age				
16	0.48	19	0.49	0.16
17	0.64	26	0.68	0.23
18	0.78	31	0.83	0.27
19	0.83	33	0.88	0.29
20–24	0.37	69	1.22	0.40
Recency of immigration				
Born outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia				
Hispanic	1.82	41	1.26	0.42
Non-Hispanic	0.92	18	0.47	0.16
First generation				
Hispanic	1.51	25	0.70	0.23
Non-Hispanic	0.75	14	0.37	0.12
Second generation or more				
Hispanic	1.78	23	0.64	0.21
Non-Hispanic	0.26	68	1.24	0.41
Region				
Northeast	0.56	33	0.85	0.28
Midwest	0.50	40	0.99	0.33
South	0.46	57	1.24	0.41
West	0.54	44	1.08	0.36

†Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2000.

Table A4.—Standard errors for table 4: High school completion rates, and number and distribution of completers ages 18–24 not currently enrolled in high school or below, by background characteristics: October 2000

Characteristic	Total	Number of completers (thousands)	Percent of all completers
Total	0.33	83	†
Sex			
Male	0.49	61	0.52
Female	0.44	56	0.52
Race/ethnicity			
White, non-Hispanic	0.33	54	0.48
Black, non-Hispanic	1.01	36	0.38
Hispanic	1.36	52	0.37
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.06	13	0.22
Age			
18–19	0.69	46	0.46
20–21	0.61	45	0.47
22–24	0.47	52	0.52
Region			
Northeast	0.73	31	0.40
Midwest	0.63	37	0.45
South	0.59	53	0.50
West	0.69	42	0.45

†Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2000.

APPENDIX B

Tables in Support of Figures

Table B1.—Supporting data for figure A: Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year, percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts, and percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who had completed high school: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Event dropout rate Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year	Status dropout rate Percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts	Completion rate Percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who completed high school[1]
1972	6.1	14.6	82.8
1973	6.3	14.1	83.7
1974	6.7	14.3	83.6
1975	5.8	13.9	83.8
1976	5.9	14.1	83.5
1977	6.5	14.1	83.6
1978	6.7	14.2	83.6
1979	6.7	14.6	83.1
1980	6.1	14.1	83.9
1981	5.9	13.9	83.8
1982	5.5	13.9	83.8
1983	5.2	13.7	83.9
1984	5.1	13.1	84.7
1985	5.2	12.6	85.4
1986	4.7	12.2	85.5
1987[2]	4.1	12.7	84.7
1988[2]	4.8	12.9	84.5
1989[2]	4.5	12.6	84.7
1990[2]	4.0	12.1	85.6
1991[2]	4.1	12.5	84.9
1992[2,3]	4.4	11.0	86.4
1993[2,3]	4.5	11.0	86.2
1994[2,3,4]	5.3	11.5	85.8
1995[2,3,4]	5.7	12.0	85.3
1996[2,3,4]	5.0	11.1	86.2
1997[2,3,4]	4.6	11.0	85.9
1998[2,3,4]	4.8	11.8	84.8
1999[2,3,4]	5.0	11.2	85.9
2000[2,3,4]	4.8	10.9	86.5

[1]Excludes those still enrolled in high school.

[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[4]Numbers in these years reflect changes in the CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table B2.—Standard errors for figure A: Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year, percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts, and percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who had completed high school: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Event dropout rate Percentage of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12 in the past year	Status dropout rate Percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who were dropouts	Completion rate Percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds who completed high school
1972	0.33	0.28	0.32
1973	0.33	0.27	0.31
1974	0.34	0.27	0.31
1975	0.32	0.27	0.30
1976	0.32	0.26	0.30
1977	0.34	0.27	0.30
1978	0.34	0.27	0.30
1979	0.34	0.27	0.30
1980	0.33	0.26	0.30
1981	0.33	0.26	0.29
1982	0.34	0.27	0.31
1983	0.33	0.27	0.31
1984	0.33	0.27	0.31
1985	0.34	0.27	0.31
1986	0.32	0.27	0.31
1987	0.30	0.28	0.32
1988	0.36	0.30	0.36
1989	0.36	0.31	0.36
1990	0.34	0.29	0.34
1991	0.34	0.30	0.34
1992	0.35	0.28	0.33
1993	0.36	0.28	0.34
1994	0.34	0.26	0.35
1995	0.35	0.27	0.35
1996	0.34	0.27	0.35
1997	0.32	0.27	0.35
1998	0.33	0.27	0.36
1999	0.33	0.26	0.34
2000	0.33	0.26	0.33

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table B3.—Supporting data for figure 1: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Event dropout rate (percent)	Family income (percent)[1]		
		Low income	Middle income	High income
1972	6.1	14.1	6.7	2.5
1973	6.3	17.3	7.0	1.8
1974	6.7	—	—	—
1975	5.8	15.7	6.0	2.6
1976	5.9	15.4	6.8	2.1
1977	6.5	15.5	7.6	2.2
1978	6.7	17.4	7.3	3.0
1979	6.7	17.1	6.9	3.6
1980	6.1	15.8	6.4	2.5
1981	5.9	14.4	6.2	2.8
1982	5.5	15.2	5.6	1.8
1983	5.2	10.4	6.0	2.2
1984	5.1	13.9	5.1	1.8
1985	5.2	14.2	5.2	2.1
1986	4.7	10.9	5.1	1.6
1987[2]	4.1	10.3	4.7	1.0
1988[2]	4.8	13.7	4.7	1.3
1989[2]	4.5	10.0	5.0	1.1
1990[2]	4.0	9.5	4.3	1.1
1991[2]	4.1	10.6	4.0	1.0
1992[2,3]	4.4	10.9	4.4	1.3
1993[2,3]	4.5	12.3	4.3	1.3
1994[2,3,4]	5.3	13.0	5.2	2.1
1995[2,3,4]	5.7	13.3	5.7	2.0
1996[2,3,4]	5.0	11.1	5.1	2.1
1997[2,3,4]	4.6	12.3	4.1	1.8
1998[2,3,4]	4.8	12.7	3.8	2.7
1999[2,3,4]	5.0	11.0	5.0	2.1
2000[2,3,4]	4.8	10.0	5.2	1.6

—Data not available for this year.

[1]Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for the year; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes. See appendix D of this report for a full definition of family income.

[2]Numbers for these years reflect the new editing procedures instituted by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[4]Numbers in these years reflect changes in the CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in the population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table B4.—Standard errors for figure 1: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by family income: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Event dropout rate (percent)	Family income (percent)		
		Low income	Middle income	High income
1972	0.33	1.55	0.45	0.39
1973	0.33	1.65	0.46	0.32
1974	0.34	—	—	—
1975	0.32	1.57	0.43	0.38
1976	0.32	1.61	0.46	0.34
1977	0.34	1.57	0.48	0.35
1978	0.34	1.69	0.48	0.40
1979	0.34	1.62	0.47	0.44
1980	0.33	1.51	0.46	0.38
1981	0.33	1.50	0.45	0.41
1982	0.34	1.52	0.46	0.36
1983	0.33	1.35	0.48	0.39
1984	0.33	1.49	0.45	0.37
1985	0.34	1.53	0.47	0.39
1986	0.32	1.33	0.45	0.34
1987	0.30	1.29	0.45	0.27
1988	0.36	1.59	0.48	0.35
1989	0.36	1.43	0.50	0.33
1990	0.34	1.39	0.45	0.33
1991	0.34	1.43	0.44	0.31
1992	0.35	1.42	0.46	0.36
1993	0.36	1.57	0.46	0.35
1994	0.34	1.44	0.44	0.41
1995	0.35	1.36	0.47	0.39
1996	0.34	1.34	0.46	0.41
1997	0.32	1.36	0.41	0.37
1998	0.33	1.34	0.39	0.46
1999	0.33	1.26	0.44	0.40
2000	0.33	1.23	0.45	0.35

—Data not available for this year.

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table B5.—Supporting data for figure 2: Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Total (percent)	Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	14.6	12.3	21.3	34.3
1973	14.1	11.6	22.2	33.5
1974	14.3	11.9	21.2	33.0
1975	13.9	11.4	22.9	29.2
1976	14.1	12.0	20.5	31.4
1977	14.1	11.9	19.8	33.0
1978	14.2	11.9	20.2	33.3
1979	14.6	12.0	21.1	33.8
1980	14.1	11.4	19.1	35.2
1981	13.9	11.4	18.4	33.2
1982	13.9	11.4	18.4	31.7
1983	13.7	11.2	18.0	31.6
1984	13.1	11.0	15.5	29.8
1985	12.6	10.4	15.2	27.6
1986	12.2	9.7	14.2	30.1
1987[2]	12.7	10.4	14.1	28.6
1988[2]	12.9	9.6	14.5	35.8
1989[2]	12.6	9.4	13.9	33.0
1990[2]	12.1	9.0	13.2	32.4
1991[2]	12.5	8.9	13.6	35.3
1992[2,3]	11.0	7.7	13.7	29.4
1993[2,3]	11.0	7.9	13.6	27.5
1994[2,3,4]	11.5	7.7	12.6	30.0
1995[2,3,4]	12.0	8.6	12.1	30.0
1996[2,3,4]	11.1	7.3	13.0	29.4
1997[2,3,4]	11.0	7.6	13.4	25.3
1998[2,3,4]	11.8	7.7	13.8	29.5
1999[2,3,4]	11.2	7.3	12.6	28.6
2000[2,3,4]	10.9	6.9	13.1	27.8

[1]Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders are included in the total but are not shown separately.

[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[4]Numbers in these years reflect changes in the CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in the population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table B6.—Standard errors for figure 2: Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Total (percent)	Race/ethnicity (percent)		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.28	0.29	1.07	2.22
1973	0.27	0.28	1.06	2.24
1974	0.27	0.28	1.05	2.08
1975	0.27	0.27	1.06	2.02
1976	0.26	0.28	1.01	2.01
1977	0.27	0.28	1.00	2.02
1978	0.27	0.28	1.00	2.00
1979	0.27	0.28	1.01	1.98
1980	0.26	0.27	0.97	1.89
1981	0.26	0.27	0.93	1.80
1982	0.27	0.29	0.98	1.93
1983	0.27	0.29	0.97	1.93
1984	0.27	0.29	0.92	1.91
1985	0.27	0.29	0.92	1.93
1986	0.27	0.28	0.90	1.88
1987	0.28	0.30	0.91	1.84
1988	0.30	0.32	1.00	2.30
1989	0.31	0.32	0.98	2.19
1990	0.29	0.30	0.94	1.91
1991	0.30	0.31	0.95	1.93
1992	0.28	0.29	0.95	1.86
1993	0.28	0.29	0.94	1.79
1994	0.26	0.27	0.75	1.16
1995	0.27	0.28	0.74	1.15
1996	0.27	0.26	0.75	1.13
1997	0.27	0.28	0.80	1.11
1998	0.27	0.28	0.81	1.12
1999	0.26	0.27	0.77	1.11
2000	0.26	0.26	0.78	1.08

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table B7.—Supporting data for figure 3: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Total (percent)	Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	82.8	86.0	72.1	56.2
1973	83.7	87.0	71.6	58.7
1974	83.6	86.7	73.0	60.1
1975	83.8	87.2	70.2	62.2
1976	83.5	86.4	73.5	60.3
1977	83.6	86.7	73.9	58.6
1978	83.6	86.9	73.4	58.8
1979	83.1	86.6	72.6	58.5
1980	83.9	87.5	75.2	57.1
1981	83.8	87.1	76.7	59.1
1982	83.8	87.0	76.4	60.9
1983	83.9	87.4	76.8	59.4
1984	84.7	87.5	80.3	63.7
1985	85.4	88.2	81.0	66.6
1986	85.5	88.8	81.8	63.5
1987[2]	84.7	87.7	81.9	65.1
1988[2]	84.5	88.7	80.9	58.2
1989[2]	84.7	89.0	81.9	59.4
1990[2]	85.6	89.6	83.2	59.1
1991[2]	84.9	89.4	82.5	56.5
1992[2,3]	86.4	90.7	82.0	62.1
1993[2,3]	86.2	90.1	81.9	64.4
1994[2,3,4]	85.8	90.7	83.3	61.8
1995[2,3,4]	85.3	89.8	84.5	62.8
1996[2,3,4]	86.2	91.5	83.0	61.9
1997[2,3,4]	85.9	90.5	82.0	66.7
1998[2,3,4]	84.8	90.2	81.4	62.8
1999[2,3,4]	85.9	91.2	83.5	63.4
2000[2,3,4]	86.5	91.8	83.7	64.1

[1]Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders are included in the total but are not shown separately.

[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[4]Numbers in these years reflect changes in the CPS due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in the population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table B8.—Standard errors for figure 3: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Total (percent)	Race/ethnicity (percent)		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.32	0.33	1.20	1.83
1973	0.31	0.31	1.17	1.83
1974	0.31	0.31	1.17	1.70
1975	0.30	0.30	1.18	1.72
1976	0.30	0.31	1.12	1.68
1977	0.30	0.31	1.12	1.66
1978	0.30	0.31	1.11	1.61
1979	0.30	0.31	1.11	1.58
1980	0.30	0.30	1.07	1.51
1981	0.29	0.30	1.02	1.46
1982	0.31	0.32	1.06	1.57
1983	0.31	0.32	1.06	1.59
1984	0.31	0.32	0.99	1.54
1985	0.31	0.32	1.00	1.58
1986	0.31	0.32	0.99	1.51
1987	0.32	0.34	0.99	1.47
1988	0.36	0.36	1.13	1.78
1989	0.36	0.37	1.11	1.73
1990	0.34	0.34	1.03	1.54
1991	0.34	0.35	1.06	1.53
1992	0.33	0.33	1.07	1.53
1993	0.34	0.35	1.07	1.49
1994	0.34	0.34	1.02	1.43
1995	0.35	0.36	1.01	1.40
1996	0.35	0.34	1.08	1.49
1997	0.35	0.36	1.10	1.42
1998	0.36	0.36	1.11	1.37
1999	0.34	0.34	1.04	1.39
2000	0.33	0.33	1.01	1.36

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table B9.—Supporting data for figure 4: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1998–2000

State	Completion rate (percent) 1998–2000*
Total	85.7
Alabama	81.6
Alaska	93.3
Arizona	73.5
Arkansas	84.1
California	82.5
Colorado	81.6
Connecticut	91.7
Delaware	91.0
District of Columbia	88.0
Florida	84.6
Georgia	83.5
Hawaii	91.8
Idaho	86.4
Illinois	87.1
Indiana	89.4
Iowa	90.8
Kansas	90.4
Kentucky	86.2
Louisiana	82.1
Maine	94.5
Maryland	87.4
Massachusetts	90.9
Michigan	89.2
Minnesota	91.9
Mississippi	82.3
Missouri	92.6
Montana	91.1
Nebraska	91.3
Nevada	77.9
New Hampshire	85.1
New Jersey	90.1
New Mexico	83.0
New York	86.3
North Carolina	86.1
North Dakota	94.4
Ohio	87.7
Oklahoma	85.7
Oregon	82.3
Pennsylvania	89.0
Rhode Island	87.9

Table B9.—Supporting data for figure 4: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1998–2000—Continued

State	Completion rate (percent) 1998–2000*
South Carolina	85.1
South Dakota	92.0
Tennessee	89.0
Texas	79.4
Utah	90.0
Vermont	90.8
Virginia	87.3
Washington	87.4
West Virginia	89.6
Wisconsin	90.0
Wyoming	86.5

*Estimates for these periods reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992 and changes in the CPS beginning in 1994 due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. They also reflect changes in population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

NOTE: Numbers in this table reflect 3-year averages.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Table B10.—Standard errors for figure 4: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1998–2000

State	Completion rate (percent) 1998–2000
Total	0.20
Alabama	1.67
Alaska	3.17
Arizona	1.73
Arkansas	2.14
California	0.60
Colorado	1.79
Connecticut	1.64
Delaware	3.18
District of Columbia	3.80
Florida	0.91
Georgia	1.23
Hawaii	2.42
Idaho	2.64
Illinois	0.91
Indiana	1.23
Iowa	1.61
Kansas	1.59
Kentucky	1.68
Louisiana	1.62
Maine	2.02
Maryland	1.53
Massachusetts	1.11
Michigan	0.89
Minnesota	1.16
Mississippi	2.11
Missouri	1.08
Montana	2.73
Nebraska	1.89
Nevada	2.92
New Hampshire	3.63
New Jersey	1.02
New Mexico	2.74
New York	0.77
North Carolina	1.16
North Dakota	2.69
Ohio	0.91
Oklahoma	1.82
Oregon	1.92
Pennsylvania	0.86
Rhode Island	3.19

Table B10.—Standard errors for figure 4: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1998–2000—Continued

State	Completion rate (percent) 1998–2000
South Carolina	1.74
South Dakota	2.78
Tennessee	1.32
Texas	0.82
Utah	1.62
Vermont	3.87
Virginia	1.28
Washington	1.25
West Virginia	2.15
Wisconsin	1.25
Wyoming	4.53

NOTE: Numbers in this table reflect 3-year averages.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 1998, 1999, and 2000.

APPENDIX C

Supplemental Tables

Table C1.—Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, and number of dropouts and population of 15- through 24-year-olds who were enrolled: October 1990 through October 2000

Year	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled (thousands)
1990	4.0	347	8,675
1991	4.1	348	8,700
1992[1]	4.4	383	8,705
1993[1]	4.5	381	8,469
1994[1,2]	5.3	497	9,377
1995[1,2]	5.7	544	9,509
1996[1,2]	5.0	485	9,612
1997[1,2]	4.6	454	9,984
1998[1,2]	4.8	479	10,079
1999[1,2]	5.0	519	10,464
2000[1,2]	4.8	488	10,126

[1]Estimates for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[2]Estimates for these years reflect changes in the CPS beginning in 1994 due to new computer-assisted interviewing methods and the change in the population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1990–2000).

Table C2.—Standard errors for table C1: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, and number of dropouts and population of 15- through 24-year-olds who were enrolled: October 1990 through October 2000

Year	Event dropout rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (thousands)	Population enrolled (thousands)
1990	0.34	29	128
1991	0.34	29	128
1992	0.35	30	128
1993	0.36	30	127
1994	0.34	32	123
1995	0.35	33	124
1996	0.34	33	129
1997	0.32	32	131
1998	0.33	33	132
1999	0.33	34	134
2000	0.33	33	133

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1990–2000).

Table C3.—Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Total (percent)	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)[1]		
		Male	Female	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	6.1	5.9	6.3	5.3	9.5	11.2
1973	6.3	6.8	5.7	5.5	9.9	10.0
1974	6.7	7.4	6.0	5.8	11.6	9.9
1975	5.8	5.4	6.1	5.0	8.7	10.9
1976	5.9	6.6	5.2	5.6	7.4	7.3
1977	6.5	6.9	6.1	6.1	8.6	7.8
1978	6.7	7.5	5.9	5.8	10.2	12.3
1979	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.0	9.9	9.8
1980	6.1	6.7	5.5	5.2	8.2	11.7
1981	5.9	6.0	5.8	4.8	9.7	10.7
1982	5.5	5.8	5.1	4.7	7.8	9.2
1983	5.2	5.8	4.7	4.4	7.0	10.1
1984	5.1	5.4	4.8	4.4	5.7	11.1
1985	5.2	5.4	5.0	4.3	7.8	9.8
1986	4.7	4.7	4.7	3.7	5.4	11.9
1987[2]	4.1	4.3	3.8	3.5	6.4	5.4
1988[2]	4.8	5.1	4.4	4.2	5.9	10.4
1989[2]	4.5	4.5	4.5	3.5	7.8	7.8
1990[2]	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.3	5.0	7.9
1991[2]	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.2	6.0	7.3
1992[2,3]	4.4	3.9	4.9	3.7	5.0	8.2
1993[2,3]	4.5	4.6	4.3	3.9	5.8	6.7
1994[2,3,4]	5.3	5.2	5.4	4.2	6.6	10.0
1995[2,3,4]	5.7	6.2	5.3	4.5	6.4	12.4
1996[2,3,4]	5.0	5.0	5.1	4.1	6.7	9.0
1997[2,3,4]	4.6	5.0	4.1	3.6	5.0	9.5
1998[2,3,4]	4.8	4.6	4.9	3.9	5.2	9.4
1999[2,3,4]	5.0	4.6	5.4	4.0	6.5	7.8
2000[2,3,4]	4.8	5.5	4.1	4.1	6.1	7.4

[1]Due to small sample sizes, American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asians/Pacific Islanders are included in the total but are not shown separately.

[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures that began in 1987 by the U.S. Census Bureau for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment in the CPS beginning in 1992. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[4]Numbers in these years reflect changes in the CPS beginning in 1994 due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in the population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table C4.—Standard errors for table C3: Event dropout rates of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10–12, by sex and race/ethnicity: October 1972 through October 2000

Year	Total	Sex (percent)		Race/ethnicity (percent)		
		Male	Female	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.33	0.46	0.48	0.34	1.32	2.81
1973	0.33	0.49	0.45	0.35	1.35	2.65
1974	0.34	0.51	0.46	0.35	1.41	2.52
1975	0.32	0.44	0.46	0.33	1.25	2.50
1976	0.32	0.48	0.43	0.35	1.15	2.05
1977	0.34	0.49	0.46	0.37	1.20	2.13
1978	0.34	0.51	0.46	0.36	1.31	2.75
1979	0.34	0.49	0.48	0.37	1.32	2.43
1980	0.33	0.49	0.45	0.35	1.21	2.56
1981	0.33	0.47	0.46	0.34	1.29	2.28
1982	0.34	0.49	0.46	0.36	1.21	2.31
1983	0.33	0.50	0.45	0.35	1.17	2.44
1984	0.33	0.49	0.46	0.36	1.06	2.51
1985	0.34	0.50	0.48	0.36	1.26	2.55
1986	0.32	0.46	0.45	0.34	1.05	2.69
1987	0.30	0.44	0.41	0.33	1.14	1.89
1988	0.36	0.52	0.50	0.39	1.20	3.09
1989	0.36	0.51	0.51	0.37	1.39	2.65
1990	0.34	0.48	0.47	0.36	1.15	2.29
1991	0.34	0.46	0.49	0.36	1.20	2.17
1992	0.35	0.46	0.53	0.38	1.09	2.23
1993	0.36	0.51	0.50	0.40	1.20	2.03
1994	0.34	0.48	0.49	0.37	1.03	1.52
1995	0.35	0.51	0.48	0.38	1.00	1.61
1996	0.34	0.49	0.51	0.38	1.05	1.50
1997	0.32	0.47	0.43	0.35	0.92	1.45
1998	0.33	0.45	0.47	0.36	0.91	1.48
1999	0.33	0.44	0.49	0.36	1.00	1.28
2000	0.33	0.49	0.43	0.37	1.01	1.24

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1972–2000).

Table C5.— Status dropout rates, number of status dropouts, and population of 16- through 24-year-olds: October 1990 through October 2000

Year	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)	Population (thousands)
1990	12.1	3,797	31,443
1991	12.5	3,881	31,171
1992[1]	11.0	3,410	30,944
1993[1]	11.0	3,396	30,845
1994[1,2]	11.5	3,727	32,560
1995[1,2]	12.0	3,876	32,379
1996[1,2]	11.1	3,611	32,452
1997[1,2]	11.0	3,624	32,960
1998[1,2]	11.8	3,942	33,445
1999[1,2]	11.2	3,829	34,173
2000[1,2]	10.9	3,776	34,568

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[2]Numbers for these years reflect changes in the CPS beginning in 1994 due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing and the change in the population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1990–2000).

Table C6.— Standard errors for table C5: Status dropout rates, number of status dropouts, and population of 16- through 24-year-olds: October 1990 through October 2000

Year	Status dropout rate (percent)	Number of status dropouts (thousands)
1990	0.29	92
1991	0.30	93
1992	0.28	88
1993	0.28	88
1994	0.26	85
1995	0.27	86
1996	0.27	87
1997	0.27	87
1998	0.27	91
1999	0.26	90
2000	0.26	89

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau. Standard errors for population estimates in table C5 cannot be calculated.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1990–2000).

Table C7.—High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1989–91 through 1998–00

State	Completion rate (percent)									
	1989–91	1990–92[1]	1991–93[1]	1992–94[2]	1993–95[2]	1994–96[2]	1995–97[2]	1996–98[2]	1997–99[2]	1998–00[2]
Total	85.0	85.5	85.7	86.1	85.8	85.8	85.8	85.6	85.5	85.7
Alabama	82.2	83.9	81.0	82.2	83.6	87.2	85.3	84.2	83.1	81.6
Alaska	88.7	86.9	89.0	90.9	90.5	87.4	85.1	88.3	90.8	93.3
Arizona	83.2	81.7	81.1	83.7	83.8	84.0	80.9	77.1	75.0	73.5
Arkansas	87.1	87.5	87.7	87.5	88.3	88.6	87.6	84.5	82.9	84.1
California	76.7	77.3	78.2	78.9	78.7	78.6	80.6	81.2	81.5	82.5
Colorado	87.8	88.1	87.2	87.6	88.4	87.9	88.2	85.5	83.3	81.6
Connecticut	89.7	89.9	90.9	92.6	94.7	96.1	94.4	91.6	90.1	91.7
Delaware	85.9	86.2	90.3	93.7	93.0	90.3	89.0	88.5	89.1	91.0
District of Columbia	82.0	84.0	87.2	86.4	87.7	86.2	85.7	84.9	87.2	88.0
Florida	83.2	84.1	84.5	83.2	80.6	80.1	81.8	83.6	84.8	84.6
Georgia	85.5	85.1	81.9	79.4	80.3	81.3	84.1	84.8	83.7	83.5
Hawaii	92.9	93.5	92.8	90.7	92.0	92.6	93.5	92.3	90.7	91.8
Idaho	83.1	84.7	89.0	86.7	86.0	84.9	87.6	85.8	85.5	86.4
Illinois	85.4	86.0	86.0	86.7	86.5	87.9	87.3	86.6	86.2	87.1
Indiana	88.9	87.8	87.4	88.4	88.5	89.7	88.9	89.3	88.6	89.4
Iowa	94.5	94.6	94.0	94.2	93.2	91.9	88.6	88.0	88.2	90.8
Kansas	92.5	93.2	91.4	92.2	90.9	91.6	91.5	91.5	91.6	90.4
Kentucky	81.6	81.1	82.6	83.3	82.4	82.2	83.3	85.2	86.6	86.2
Louisiana	80.6	83.9	82.5	83.9	80.1	82.2	80.4	81.6	82.1	82.1
Maine	90.5	91.9	93.4	94.0	92.9	91.4	90.4	91.6	92.9	94.5
Maryland	87.3	88.6	91.0	92.9	93.6	93.4	94.9	94.5	90.1	87.4
Massachusetts	89.6	89.8	90.5	91.2	92.5	92.4	91.4	90.6	90.1	90.9
Michigan	86.3	87.2	88.3	89.2	88.6	89.1	89.7	91.0	90.1	89.2
Minnesota	92.0	92.5	91.7	93.2	93.1	95.3	91.6	90.0	90.4	91.9
Mississippi	84.0	85.4	88.6	88.8	83.9	82.0	80.9	82.0	82.1	82.3
Missouri	88.0	88.1	88.3	90.0	90.3	89.9	89.2	90.4	91.6	92.6
Montana	92.7	91.6	91.6	91.6	89.6	89.8	89.3	91.1	91.0	91.1
Nebraska	90.8	92.5	92.5	95.9	94.1	93.0	90.8	91.2	91.5	91.3
Nevada	82.6	82.1	83.3	83.4	81.9	81.5	76.7	78.1	74.5	77.9
New Hampshire	87.3	87.9	89.0	86.6	86.9	87.4	90.3	89.2	87.3	85.1
New Jersey	90.0	90.8	89.8	91.0	91.6	93.0	93.0	91.8	90.2	90.1
New Mexico	84.7	84.1	84.3	83.7	82.3	78.8	78.8	78.6	82.7	83.0
New York	87.7	88.0	87.6	87.5	87.0	86.4	85.0	84.7	85.2	86.3
North Carolina	82.8	83.0	84.2	85.3	85.5	85.3	85.3	85.2	86.1	86.1
North Dakota	95.6	96.3	95.7	96.6	96.4	97.9	97.2	94.7	93.6	94.4
Ohio	89.3	90.0	89.7	89.6	88.3	87.7	88.5	89.4	89.3	87.7
Oklahoma	87.1	84.3	81.8	83.1	86.7	89.5	87.4	86.0	85.4	85.7
Oregon	89.2	89.6	85.5	82.9	82.6	81.1	79.3	75.4	78.5	82.3
Pennsylvania	90.2	90.2	90.5	89.7	89.4	89.6	88.3	87.6	87.6	89.0
Rhode Island	87.4	87.9	90.4	90.7	89.4	87.5	86.0	86.1	86.7	87.9

Table C7.—High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1989–91 through 1998–00—Continued

State	Completion rate (percent)									
	1989–91	1990–92[1]	1991–93[1]	1992–94[2]	1993–95[2]	1994–96[2]	1995–97[2]	1996–98[2]	1997–99[2]	1998–00[2]
South Carolina	82.6	85.0	85.5	87.0	87.8	88.4	89.2	87.6	86.9	85.1
South Dakota	87.6	89.1	91.2	93.2	91.3	89.6	88.2	89.8	91.5	92.0
Tennessee	76.5	76.7	77.5	82.3	84.5	83.3	84.2	86.8	89.5	89.0
Texas	78.4	80.0	81.2	80.5	79.5	79.3	80.5	80.2	79.2	79.4
Utah	93.9	93.9	94.6	93.9	93.3	91.3	90.9	90.7	89.7	90.0
Vermont	85.9	87.0	89.6	89.8	88.1	87.2	89.6	93.6	95.3	90.8
Virginia	87.0	88.6	89.8	88.6	87.5	86.3	87.1	85.9	87.0	87.3
Washington	87.4	90.7	89.2	87.3	85.7	86.8	88.2	87.7	87.0	87.4
West Virginia	82.7	83.3	84.6	85.6	86.8	87.7	88.6	89.1	89.2	89.6
Wisconsin	93.4	92.4	92.4	93.4	93.5	94.2	92.4	90.8	90.6	90.0
Wyoming	91.4	92.0	92.1	91.6	90.8	89.4	88.9	87.6	87.8	86.5

[1]Estimates for these periods reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

[2]Estimates for these periods reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS beginning in 1992 and changes in the CPS beginning in 1994 due to newly instituted computer-assisted interviewing. They also reflect changes in population controls used in the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustments for undercounting in the 1990 Census. See appendix D for a fuller description of the impact of these changes on reported rates.

NOTE: Numbers in this table reflect 3-year averages.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1989–2000).

Table C8.—Standard errors for table C7: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1989–91 through 1998–00

State	Completion rate (percent)									
	1989–91	1990–92	1991–93	1992–94	1993–95	1994–96	1995–97	1996–98	1997–99	1998–00
Total	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.19	0.19	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Alabama	1.75	1.65	1.77	1.75	1.58	1.37	1.47	1.50	1.59	1.67
Alaska	4.42	4.78	4.27	3.93	3.62	4.11	4.53	4.02	3.70	3.17
Arizona	1.91	2.06	2.17	2.01	1.70	1.56	1.65	1.70	1.71	1.73
Arkansas	2.11	2.09	2.16	2.08	1.86	1.70	1.84	2.04	2.20	2.14
California	0.71	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.66	0.64	0.65	0.63	0.63	0.60
Colorado	1.74	1.74	1.78	1.69	1.44	1.42	1.48	1.63	1.75	1.79
Connecticut	1.58	1.60	1.59	1.46	1.19	1.01	1.27	1.56	1.73	1.64
Delaware	4.10	4.10	3.52	2.79	2.69	3.09	3.43	3.43	3.49	3.18
District of Columbia	4.71	4.79	4.65	4.78	3.83	3.85	4.05	4.22	3.95	3.80
Florida	1.02	0.98	0.95	0.97	0.96	0.97	0.99	0.95	0.92	0.91
Georgia	1.31	1.35	1.44	1.48	1.29	1.26	1.24	1.24	1.28	1.23
Hawaii	2.49	2.31	2.45	2.75	2.34	2.05	1.97	2.15	2.51	2.42
Idaho	3.82	3.71	3.19	3.19	2.81	2.73	2.61	2.77	2.83	2.64
Illinois	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.93	0.87	0.83	0.88	0.91	0.93	0.91
Indiana	1.28	1.36	1.34	1.26	1.15	1.12	1.23	1.21	1.26	1.23
Iowa	1.28	1.24	1.31	1.26	1.24	1.35	1.76	1.87	1.86	1.61
Kansas	1.55	1.48	1.64	1.58	1.60	1.53	1.56	1.52	1.50	1.59
Kentucky	1.86	1.94	1.95	1.93	1.81	1.79	1.85	1.78	1.72	1.68
Louisiana	1.79	1.67	1.77	1.77	1.75	1.63	1.66	1.58	1.57	1.62
Maine	2.68	2.42	2.16	2.05	2.14	2.36	2.68	2.50	2.33	2.02
Maryland	1.41	1.34	1.26	1.15	1.04	1.07	1.02	1.06	1.37	1.53
Massachusetts	1.13	1.16	1.16	1.13	0.98	1.01	1.15	1.18	1.18	1.11
Michigan	1.04	1.03	0.99	0.96	0.91	0.89	0.91	0.85	0.88	0.89
Minnesota	1.19	1.17	1.22	1.11	1.05	0.91	1.25	1.35	1.29	1.16
Mississippi	2.09	2.02	1.85	1.80	1.99	2.07	2.20	2.14	2.14	2.11
Missouri	1.33	1.31	1.34	1.27	1.23	1.19	1.29	1.20	1.16	1.08
Montana	2.92	3.00	2.96	3.07	3.24	3.08	3.16	2.74	2.74	2.73
Nebraska	2.21	2.09	2.00	1.49	1.66	1.76	2.07	1.97	1.89	1.89
Nevada	3.40	3.46	3.41	3.23	3.11	3.09	3.45	3.12	3.11	2.92
New Hampshire	2.95	3.05	2.93	3.25	2.95	3.03	2.85	2.99	3.29	3.63
New Jersey	1.01	1.01	1.08	1.04	0.92	0.86	0.89	0.94	1.00	1.02
New Mexico	2.82	2.97	3.00	2.99	2.78	2.86	2.89	2.85	2.66	2.74
New York	0.74	0.74	0.77	0.77	0.72	0.72	0.79	0.80	0.80	0.77
North Carolina	1.36	1.37	1.35	1.28	1.17	1.16	1.20	1.17	1.14	1.16
North Dakota	2.38	2.26	2.40	2.17	2.02	1.56	1.82	2.52	2.84	2.69
Ohio	0.86	0.86	0.88	0.89	0.86	0.88	0.89	0.87	0.86	0.91
Oklahoma	1.88	2.01	2.15	2.14	1.79	1.55	1.71	1.84	1.87	1.82
Oregon	1.81	1.78	2.01	2.15	1.97	2.02	2.13	2.20	2.08	1.92
Pennsylvania	0.85	0.85	0.83	0.86	0.82	0.82	0.90	0.91	0.91	0.86
Rhode Island	3.15	3.20	2.95	3.02	3.06	3.33	3.48	3.36	3.27	3.19

Table C8.—Standard errors for table C7: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by state: October 1989–91 through 1998–00—Continued

State	Completion rate (percent)									
	1989–91	1990–92	1991–93	1992–94	1993–95	1994–96	1995–97	1996–98	1997–99	1998–00
South Carolina	1.91	1.82	1.79	1.70	1.53	1.48	1.52	1.60	1.66	1.74
South Dakota	3.71	3.51	3.26	2.90	3.06	3.24	3.44	3.07	2.77	2.78
Tennessee	1.72	1.79	1.76	1.59	1.41	1.46	1.50	1.41	1.31	1.32
Texas	0.93	0.90	0.87	0.87	0.81	0.78	0.80	0.82	0.85	0.82
Utah	1.59	1.60	1.53	1.57	1.45	1.56	1.60	1.60	1.63	1.62
Vermont	4.71	4.67	4.08	3.94	4.03	3.99	3.90	3.06	2.79	3.87
Virginia	1.34	1.28	1.18	1.21	1.15	1.23	1.28	1.36	1.28	1.28
Washington	1.52	1.33	1.38	1.41	1.34	1.30	1.32	1.29	1.28	1.25
West Virginia	2.65	2.58	2.43	2.21	2.18	2.25	2.25	2.17	2.16	2.15
Wisconsin	1.05	1.12	1.13	1.07	0.97	0.91	1.07	1.20	1.22	1.25
Wyoming	4.21	4.08	3.94	3.85	3.69	3.93	4.30	4.38	4.42	4.53

NOTE: Some of the standard error estimates in this table may differ from those previously published due to changes in the generalized variance parameters developed by the U.S. Census Bureau. Numbers in this table reflect 3-year averages.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October (1989–2000).

APPENDIX D

Technical Notes

Definition of Who Is a Dropout

There are variations in the dropout definitions of the existing data sources, which include the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the Common Core of Data (CCD). In addition, the age or grade span examined and the type of dropout rate—status or event—varies across the two data sources. Furthermore, there were potentially significant changes in CPS procedures in 1986, 1992, and 1994.[25]

Defining and Calculating Event Dropout Rates Using the CCD

The Common Core of Data (CCD), administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), is an annual survey of the state-level education agencies in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas. Through this survey, statistical information is collected on public school districts and their schools, staff, students, and finances.

A dropout data collection component was field-tested during the 1989–90 school year. The participants were in approximately 300 school districts that included representatives from 27 states and two territories. The data were gathered through administrative records maintained at school districts and schools. The field test data were used to inform the design of a dropout statistics component for the CCD. In 1998–99, a total of 48 states and the District of Columbia submitted dropout data to the CCD. However, many states did not follow agreed-upon reporting definitions. A total of 37 states and the District of Columbia reported using acceptable definitions for the 1998-99 school year.

The definition that was agreed upon by NCES and the states was the following:

The denominator of the rate is the October 1st membership count for the state.

The numerator (dropouts) are all individuals who:

- were enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year;
- were not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year;
- have not graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved education program; and
- do not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions: transferred to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved education program; temporary absence due to suspension or school-approved education program; or death.

[25] While a change in procedures occurred in 1986, the new procedures are reflected beginning in 1987 in this report. See page 64 for a more detailed explanation of these changes.

For the purpose of this definition:

- The school year is the 12-month period of time from the first day of school (operationally set as October 1), with dropouts from the previous summer reported for the year and grade in which they fail to enroll;[26]
- Individuals who are not accounted for on October 1 are considered dropouts; and,
- An individual has graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved education program upon receipt of formal recognition from school authorities. A state- or district-approved education program may consist of special education and district- or state-sponsored GED preparation.

The dropout data collection was initiated with a set of instructions to state CCD coordinators in the summer of 1991. Those instructions specified the details of dropout data to be collected during the 1991–92 school year. Dropouts, like graduates, are reported for the preceding school year. The 1991–92 data were submitted to NCES as a component of the 1992–93 CCD data collection. Most recently, the 1998–99 dropout data were submitted as a component of the 1999–2000 CCD data collection.

The dropout data collection through the CCD is designed to be consistent with the current CPS procedures. However, there are differences in dropout data collection procedures between the two data sets. First, the CCD collection represents a state's public school dropout counts; in other words, the dropout rate represents the number of public school students who have dropped out over the total number of public school students enrolled in the state. This differs from the CPS state-level dropout counts in a few ways. The CPS counts include students who were enrolled in either public or private schools. Secondly, the CPS is a count of students who live in the state, not necessarily those who went to school in that state. The third difference between CPS and CCD dropout collection procedures is that the CCD collection includes dropouts in grades 7 through 12 versus grades 10 through 12 in the CPS (although CCD event rates are reported for grades 9 through 12 in this report). Fourth, the CCD collection is based on administrative records rather than a household survey as in CPS. One other difference is that, in contrast to the CPS, the CCD collection counts those students who leave public school to enroll in GED programs (outside the public education system) as dropouts.

As when developing any nationally consistent definition, there is considerable variation in the operationalization of the dropout definition across local, state, and federal data collections on such issues as whether:

- those who return to school after October 1 are identified as dropouts;
- those who complete a grade and drop out over the summer are attributed to the grade completed or the next grade;
- those who enter GED programs are considered dropouts; and

[26]Although states were asked to report on an October through September reporting cycle, for purposes of this report, states that reported on an alternative July through June cycle are also included.

- those who drop out more than once can be counted as a dropout more than once.

Defining and Calculating Dropout Rates Using the CPS

Event Dropout Rates

The October Supplement to the CPS is the only national data source that currently can be used to estimate annual national dropout rates. As a measure of recent dropout experiences, the event dropout rate measures the proportion of students who dropped out over a 1-year interval of time.

The numerator of the event dropout rate for 2000 is the number of persons 15 through 24 years old surveyed in 2000 who were enrolled in grades 10–12 in October 1999, were not enrolled in high school in October 2000, and who also did not complete high school (that is, had not received a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate) between October 1999 and October 2000.

The denominator of the event dropout rate for 2000 is the sum of the dropouts (that is, the numerator) and all persons 15 through 24 years old who were attending grades 10–12 in October 1999, who were still enrolled in October 2000, or who graduated or completed high school between October 1999 and October 2000.

The dropout interval is defined to include the previous summer and the current school year, so that once a grade is completed, the student is then at risk of dropping out of the next grade. Given that the data collection is tied to each young adult's enrollment status in October of two consecutive years, any student who drops out and returns within the 12-month period is not counted as a dropout.

Status Dropout Rates

The status dropout rate is a cumulative rate that estimates the proportion of young adults who are dropouts, regardless of when they dropped out.

The numerator of the status dropout rate for 2000 is the number of young adults ages 16 through 24 years who, as of October 2000, had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled. The denominator is the total number of 16- through 24-year-olds in October 2000.

CPS Design

The CPS is a nationally representative sample survey of all households. The survey is conducted in approximately 50,000 households. Households are interviewed for 4 successive monthly interviews, are not interviewed for the next 8 months, and then re-interviewed for the following 4 months. The sample frame is a complete list of dwelling-unit addresses at the time of the Census updated by demolitions and new construction and field listings. The population surveyed excludes members of the Armed Forces, inmates of correctional institutions, and patients in long-term medical or custodial facilities; it is referred to as the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. Typically, about 4 percent of dwelling units are not interviewed because occupants are not at home after repeated callbacks or for some other reason.

An adult member of each household serves as the informant for that household, supplying basic monthly data for each member of the household. In addition, in October, supplementary questions regarding school enrollment are asked about eligible household members 3 years old and over. Most interviews are conducted by phone using computer-assisted telephone interviewing.

CPS Coverage Errors

Coverage errors in CPS can occur for a variety of reasons. For example, CPS is based on a sample of households in which a person within the household (the reference person) is asked to provide information on other members of the household. If the list of households is incomplete, whole households can be missed. If for some reason the reference person does not give a full enumeration of their household members, individuals can be omitted from the survey.[27] It is estimated that the CPS survey misses about 7 persons out of 100 because of such coverage errors. That is, the coverage ratio is about 93 percent. However, for some subgroups this ratio is much lower. Historically, Black and Hispanic males have had low coverage ratios. In 1996, the coverage ratio for Black males age 20 to 29 was about 66 percent—i.e. one in three were missed in the survey.

CPS uses independently derived population estimates to modify the sampling weights to adjust for the undercount of various subpopulations. These adjustments are made within weighting cells based on age, race, ethnicity, and sex. To oversimplify, if Black males age 20 to 29 are undercovered by 50 percent, then the first stage sampling weights for Black males age 20 to 29 are doubled to properly sum to known population totals. However, this weighting will introduce bias into the estimates of dropout rates if those persons missed by CPS drop out at a different rate than those not missed by CPS (for example, if Black males ages 20 to 29 missed in the survey drop out at a higher rate than those not missed).

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[27] See U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. (2000). *Current Population Survey Design and Methodology* (Technical Paper #63).

While the size of this bias is not known (i.e. one cannot interview people who are not included in a survey), it is possible to make some assumptions and estimate what the *potential* bias may be. This was done for CPS data, as shown in table D1 below.[28] Using the age-, sex-, and race/ethnicity-specific coverage ratios provided by the Census Bureau, the status and completion rates were calculated under different assumptions about the dropout status of those persons missed by the CPS sampling frame.

The second column of table D1 shows the status dropout rates and completion rates calculated directly from the 1999 CPS. The data in the third and fourth columns were calculated with the assumption that those undercovered by the survey—regardless of their age, race/ethnicity, and sex—were more likely to be dropouts than others, perhaps a reasonable assumption. This would mean that undercovered White males are more likely to be dropouts than covered White males, and so on with other groups. The third column shows the status dropout rates and completion rates assuming that 50 percent of those undercovered dropped out. The fourth column shows rates based on a "worst-case scenario" in which all of those who were undercovered actually dropped out. Although this assumption is almost certainly wrong, it does provide an upper bound to the effect of undercoverage on these rates.

Table D1.—Status dropout and completion rates adjusted for potential undercoverage: October 1999

		Assuming undercoverage* population has:	
	Actual CPS rate	50% dropout rate	100% dropout rate
		Status dropout rate	
Total	11.2	12.1	13.0
White, non-Hispanic	11.1	11.8	12.5
Black, non-Hispanic	13.2	15.1	17.0
Hispanic	23.7	25.9	28.1
Other	4.4	4.7	5.0
		Completion rate	
Total	85.8	80.4	74.9
White, non-Hispanic	86.2	81.4	76.7
Black, non-Hispanic	82.4	73.3	64.2
Hispanic	68.2	62.4	56.6
Other	93.6	88.2	82.8

* Based on undercoverage ratios by age, sex, and race/ethnicity, 1996.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 1999.

[28] The following discussion is based, in part, on P. Kaufman, *The National Dropout Data Collection System: Assessing Consistency*, a paper prepared for Achieve and the Harvard Civil Rights Project Dropout Research: Accurate Counts and Positive Interventions – January 13, 2001. In that paper 1999 data were analyzed.

Using these assumptions, adjusting for the undercoverage raises the status dropout rate from 11.2 percent to 12.1 percent for the 50 percent dropout scenario. The status dropout rate for Blacks rises from 13.2 percent to 17.0 percent under the worse-case scenario. The undercoverage would potentially have a greater effect on the completion rate, lowering the overall rate from 85.8 percent to 80.4 percent (under the 50 percent dropout assumption). The completion rate for Blacks falls from 82.4 percent to 73.3 percent. It must be emphasized again, however, that the assumption that 50 percent of those missed by CPS are dropouts may not be true. The truth lies somewhere between the extreme of not accounting for possible bias due to undercoverage and the extreme of assuming that all of those undercounted dropped out.

CPS Dropout Data Collection

CPS data on educational attainment and enrollment status in the current year and prior year are used to identify dropouts, and additional CPS data are used to describe some of their basic characteristics. The CPS provides the only source of national time series data on dropout rates. However, because CPS collects no information on school characteristics and experiences, its usefulness in addressing dropout issues is primarily for providing some insights on who drops out. In addition, the sample design of the CPS yields estimates for Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders that tend to have large standard errors (due to small sample sizes), which can make it difficult to interpret patterns in dropout rates for these groups.

The October CPS Supplement enrollment items used to identify dropouts include the following:

- *Is . . . attending or enrolled in regular school?*
- *What grade or year is . . . attending?*
- *Was . . . attending or enrolled in a regular school or college in October, 199x, that is, October of last year?*
- *What grade or year was . . . attending last year?*

Changes Introduced in 1986

In an effort to improve data quality, in 1986 the U.S. Census Bureau instituted new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. The effect of the editing changes was evaluated for data from 1986 by applying both the old and new editing procedures. The result was an increase in the number of students enrolled in school the current year and a decrease in the number of students enrolled last year but not enrolled in the current year (i.e., dropouts). The new editing procedures lowered, but not significantly, the 1986 event rate for 14- through 24-year-olds dropping out of grades 10–12 by about 0.4 percentage points, from 4.69 to 4.28. The changes in the editing procedures made even less of a difference in the status dropout rates for 16- through 24-year-olds (12.2 percent based on the old procedures and 12.1 percent based on the new).

While a change in procedures occurred in 1986, the new procedures are reflected beginning in 1987 in this report. The 1986 data are based on the old editing procedures.

Changes Introduced in 1992

Before 1992, educational attainment was based on the basic monthly questions on highest grade attended and completed. Identification as a high school graduate was derived based on attendance and completion of grade 12. The items used to identify educational attainment before 1992 were the following:

- *What is the highest grade or year . . . has attended?*
- *Did . . . complete that grade?*

The 1992 redesign of the CPS introduced a change in the method used to identify high school completers. Dropout data from the CPS were now based on a combination of basic monthly data on educational attainment and October Supplement data on school enrollment. In 1992, the U.S. Census Bureau changed the items on the basic monthly questionnaire that measured each individual's educational attainment. The basic monthly educational attainment item is as follows:

- *What is the highest level of school . . . has completed or the highest degree . . . has received?*

These response categories apply to grades in high school:

- 9th grade;
- 10th grade;
- 11th grade; and
- 12th grade—no diploma.

In the calculation of dropout rates, students whose highest grade completed is 9th, 10th, or 11th grade are assumed to have dropped out in the next grade (i.e., the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades, respectively).

The following response categories are used to identify high school completers:

- high school graduate—high school diploma or the equivalent (for example, GED); and
- all categories indicating some postsecondary education, from "some college, no degree" through "doctorate degree."

Although the response categories are not automatically read to each respondent, they can be used as a prompt to help clarify the meaning of a question or a response. Identification as a high school completer is based on the direct response to the new control card educational attainment item.

Differences between the pre- and post-1992 methods of identifying high school completers reflect two phenomena: not all 12th-grade completers receive a high school

diploma or equivalent, and not all holders of a high school diploma or certificate complete the 12th grade. These differences affect the numbers and proportions of event and status dropouts.

Differences in the event dropout rate. In the case of the event dropout rate, prior to 1992, students who completed 12th grade and left high school without graduating or receiving an equivalent credential were counted as completers when they were, in fact, dropouts. On the other hand, some students who left school because they completed high school before the 12th grade were identified as dropouts when they were really early completers (e.g., those who passed the California Challenge Exam, received a GED certificate, or were admitted early to college).[29] The current use of actual graduation or completion status includes the first group as dropouts and the second group as completers.

Compared with previous years, the event dropout rate now includes in the numerator count 12th-graders who did not receive any type of credential, while the early completers are not included in the numerator as dropouts. The denominator is unchanged.

In 1992, the net effect of these changes resulted in an increase in the aggregate event dropout rate that was not significant. In 1992, the October CPS included both versions of the educational attainment items—the old items based on the number of years of school completed and the new one based on the more accurate response categories.[30] Using the old items, the estimated event rate for 1992 was 4.0 percent, compared with a rate of 4.4 percent in 1992 using the new educational attainment item.

Differences in the status dropout rate. The status dropout rate involves another group of students who were coded differently before 1992. These students leave high school before completing the 12th grade, never complete the 12th grade, but later graduate or complete high school by some alternative means, such as an equivalency exam. Before 1992, these young adults were coded as dropouts. Since 1992, members of this group have been coded as graduates or completers. Furthermore, the explicit inclusion of high school graduation or completion, including the GED as a response category, may have increased the likelihood of identifying late completers.

Under the procedures introduced in 1992, the 12th-graders who did not complete high school or the equivalent are included in the numerator of the status dropout rate, while early and late completers are not included. The denominator was not changed.

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[29]Although before 1992 the questionnaire did not include the words "high school diploma or equivalency certificate," the interviewer instructions included an instruction to record 12th grade for people who completed high school with a GED or other certificate, although they had dropped out earlier. The specific inclusion of these words on the questionnaire appear to have made a difference in the quality of responses from the household informant.

[30]Unlike previous years, however, data for individuals missing on the variables representing years of school completed ("What is the highest grade or year . . . has attended?" and "Did . . . complete that grade?") were not imputed by the U.S. Census Bureau. For this analysis, missing data were imputed on these variables based on the grade individuals attended last year (if enrolled last year). For those individuals who were missing data and were not enrolled last year, the highest grade completed was imputed by examining the responses to the new educational attainment variable.

These changes, including the identification and removal of late completers from the dropout count, contributed to a decrease in the status dropout rate. Indeed, using years of school completed rather than the new educational attainment item, the status rate in 1992 rose to 11.4 percent rather than the 11.0 percent based on the new educational attainment item. However, the estimate of 11.4 percent based on the old item is still lower than the status rate for 1991 (12.5 percent). While the estimate of 11.0 percent in 1992 could represent real change in the status dropout rate—the fact that this would be the largest decrease in the status dropout rate seen in the time series data from 1972 to 1995, coupled with the fact that the rate for 1993 also was 11.0 percent—leads one to speculate that introducing the new educational attainment item resulted in more accurate data on educational attainment throughout the survey, including the variables that had been used to calculate the number of years of school completed.

One exception to the procedures used to identify dropouts in the CPS is the treatment by the Census Bureau of students in special schools. These special schools are:

> ". . . schools that are not in the regular school system, such as trade schools, business colleges, and schools for the mentally handicapped, which do not advance students to regular school degrees.[31]

When the U.S. Census Bureau identifies students in special schools, they code them as not enrolled in regular school. If a person enrolled in a special school is reported as completing less than the 12th grade, he or she will be counted as a status dropout.

Changes Introduced in 1994

During the 1994 data collection and processing, two additional changes were implemented in the CPS. Computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) was introduced, resulting in higher completion rates for each individual data item and thus less reliance on allocation of missing responses. If the allocation procedures yielded a distribution different from the 1994 reported patterns, there is the potential for a change in the distribution of the high school completion status.

In 1994, there were also changes introduced in the processing and computing phase of data preparation. The benchmarking year for these survey estimates was changed from the 1980 Census to the 1990 Census. In addition, adjustments for undercounting in the Census were also included, which had not been done before. Thus, any age, sex, or racial/ethnic groups that were found to be under-represented in the 1990 Census were given increased weights. Analysis using 1993 data of the effect of the changes in the benchmarking year and adjustments for undercounting indicate that the change especially affected the weights assigned to Hispanic young adults (table D2).

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[31]U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. *School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October* 1994 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, September 1996).

Table D2.—Average weights and population estimates using 1980 and 1990 Census-based weights for all 15- through 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: October 1993

Race/ethnicity	1980-based weights		1990-based weights		
	Average weight	Population estimate (thousands)	Average weight	Population estimate (thousands)	Percentage change*
White, non-Hispanic	1.79	23,911	1.84	24,611	2.8
Black, non-Hispanic	2.25	5,087	2.33	5,285	3.6
Hispanic	2.09	3,998	2.48	4,747	18.7

*Change in rates between 1980-based weights and 1990-based weights using 1980 as the base year (i.e., for Whites the calculation is [(1.84-1.79)/1.79]).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 1993.

These changes can affect both the numerator and denominator of the dropout rates. Analyses of the 1993 data showed that the change in the benchmark year for the sample weights increased the Hispanic status and event dropout rates somewhat, while it had little effect on the White or Black rates (table D3). However, the change in the overall event and status rates appears to be driven by the increase in the estimated size of the Hispanic population. Since Hispanics drop out at higher rates than do other groups, increasing their relative proportion of the population increases the overall dropout rates.

Table D3 shows that, overall, the change in the benchmark year had a larger impact on status dropout rates than on event dropout rates. Using the 1990-based weights increased the event rate by 1.3 percent, but raised the status rate by 3.2 percent.

Table D3.—Estimated event and status dropout rates based on 1980 and 1990 Census weights: October 1993

Characteristic	1980-based weights (percent)		1990-based weights (percent)		Percent difference in rates	
	Event	Status	Event	Status	Event	Status
Total	4.46	11.01	4.52	11.36	1.3	3.2
Sex						
Male	4.58	11.17	4.65	11.61	1.5	4.0
Female	4.34	10.85	4.38	11.10	1.0	2.3
Race/ethnicity						
White, non-Hispanic	3.93	7.94	3.95	7.96	0.5	0.3
Black, non-Hispanic	5.83	13.56	5.81	13.52	–0.3	–0.3
Hispanic	6.72	27.52	6.90	27.88	2.8	1.3
Other	2.79	7.01	2.87	7.04	2.9	0.4

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 1993.

Changes Introduced in 1997

In 1997, the Census Bureau added an item on alternative credentials to the basic monthly survey. Since then there have been two items on the October CPS concerning alternative credentials—one on the basic survey and one on the supplement. The item on the basic survey is:

- *People can get their high school diploma in a variety of ways, such as graduation from high school or by getting a GED or other equivalent. How did ... get ... 's high school diploma?*

Response choices were:

- Graduation from high school
- GED or other equivalent

Asking this item every month in the basic survey rather than just in the October supplement may have had some effect on the responses to the October supplement item. However, the magnitude of any such effect is unknown.

Changes Introduced in 2000

In 2000, the variable indicating whether a person had an alternative credential was a derived variable based on the responses to these four items:

1. Those persons 15 to 29 years old whose response to:

    - *"What is the highest level of school ... has completed or the highest degree ... has received?"*

was a high school diploma ONLY were given a value on the GED item according to their basic survey GED item answer. They were not asked any further GED questions in the supplement.

2. People with less than a high school education on the educational attainment item were asked the following item in the supplement.

    - *"Earlier you said that the highest level you had completed was [VALUE]. Did ... complete high school by getting a GED or other equivalent?"*

3. People with greater than a high school education were asked the following item in the supplement.

    - *"People can get their high school diploma in a variety of ways, such as graduation from high school or by getting a GED or other equivalent. How did ... get ... 's high school diploma ?"*

4. Finally, people who did not have an educational attainment value were asked the following item in the supplement.

- *"Earlier you were unable to tell us the highest level of education...had completed. Did ... complete high school by getting a GED or other equivalent ?"*

This reformulation of the GED items on the supplement and the editing of the supplement item based on the control card responses may have had an impact on the estimate of the percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds with an alternative credential. (It should have had little effect on the event or status dropout rates).

Defining and Calculating High School Completion Rates Using the CPS

The educational attainment and high school completion status data from the October CPS are also used to measure the high school completion rates. The completion rate computed and published is for the young adult population in the years beyond high school—that is, the 18- through 24-year-old population. These rates are reported nationally by various demographic variables such as age, sex, and race/ethnicity. At the state level, 3-year moving averages are computed to yield more stable estimates for completion rates. The high school completion rate is calculated based on responses to a basic item about the highest level of educational attainment achieved by a person (see page 65). Changes in the GED items introduced in 2000 affect the amount of detail available about how people completed high school, but not the calculation of the high school completion rate itself.

As was noted in the section discussing completion rates in this report, state completion rates reflect the experiences of the 18- through 24-year-olds living in the state at the time of the interview; thus, movements in and out of states to accommodate employment and postsecondary education may influence the apparent rates in some states. For example, a state with a relatively large unskilled labor employment sector might have a lower high school completion rate than anticipated due to migration of young workers from other states. Conversely, a state with a disproportionate number of colleges and universities might have a higher high school completion rate than anticipated due to an influx of postsecondary education students.

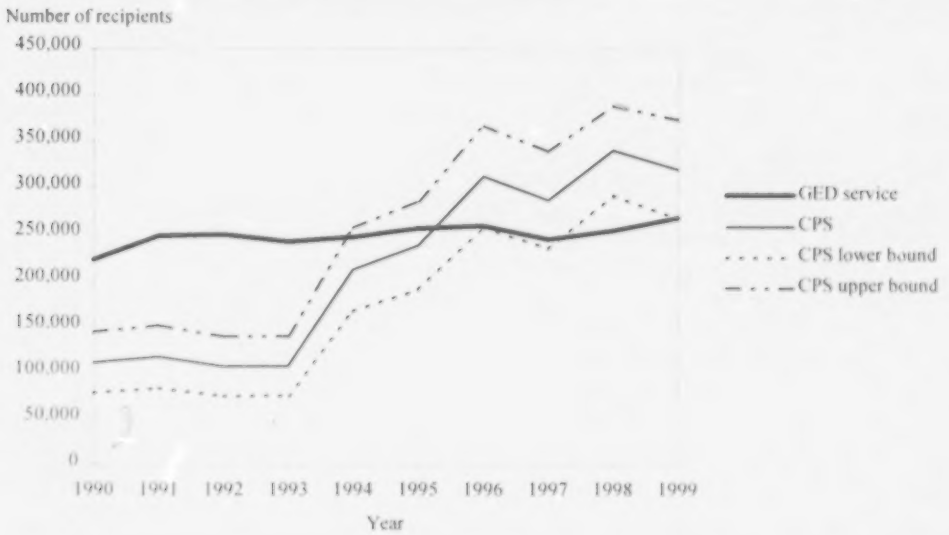
Increases in GED Rates

Though GED data are not presented for 2000, data from past reports in this series indicated that there has been a substantial increase in the last few years in the estimate of the percentage of 18- through 24-year-olds obtaining GEDs. For example, the 1999 report showed that the alternative completion rate was 4.9 percent in 1993; however, it rose to 7.0 percent in 1994, 9.8 percent in 1996, 10.1 in 1998, and then 9.2 in 1999. Although the standard errors of these estimates are fairly large, the absolute changes are also quite large. The increase between 1993 and 1994 came at the time when CPS instituted computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) in 1994. However, increases have

occurred between subsequent years, suggesting that the change in instrumentation was not the only reason for the increase in reported GED credentialing from 1993 to 1994.

The American Council on Education (ACE), which administers the GED, produces annual reports on the number of persons taking the GED and the number of persons who were issued a GED credential. From these reports, it is possible to calculate the number of 18- through 24-year-olds who received a GED each year from 1989 through 1999. It is also possible to estimate the same percentages from the CPS data for this period by looking at both the educational attainment item and the method of completion item. The CPS estimates of the number of GED recipients in the years 1990 through 1993 were lower than the ACE estimates in each of these years. For 1994 through 1997, the CPS estimates are closer to the corresponding estimates from ACE than in previous years and, in fact, are not statistically different from the corresponding ACE estimates. The CPS estimate for 1998 was statistically different from the ACE estimate (figure D1 and table D4), but in 1999, the estimates from CPS and ACE did not differ.

Figure D1.—Number of 18- through 24-year-olds who received a GED in a given year: 1990 through 1999



NOTE: These numbers represent the total number of GED credentials earned by 18- through 24-year-olds in the United States. The GED estimate from CPS may include alternative high school credentials other than the GED.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (various years); and American Council on Education, GED Testing Service, *GED Statistical Report*, 1990 to 1999.

Table D4.—Number of 18- through 24-year-olds who received a GED in a given year: 1990 through 1999

Year	GED Service[1]	CPS[1,2]	Standard error (CPS)
1990	222,295	111,023	16,728
1991	247,767	117,371	17,197
1992	249,470	107,030	16,425
1993	241,787	107,415	16,455
1994	247,051	211,560	23,047
1995	256,441	237,876	24,424
1996	258,957	312,645	27,957
1997	244,749	286,811	26,793
1998	254,239	340,784	24,790
1999	267,932	320,187	27,331

[1]These numbers represent the total number of GED credentials earned by 18- through 24-year-olds in the United States only.
[2]The estimate of the number of GEDs from CPS may include alternative high school credentials other than those earned by passing the GED.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (various years); and American Council on Education, GED Testing Service, *GED Statistical Report*, 1990 to 1999.

Definition of Family Income in the CPS

Family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent. Income includes money income from all sources including jobs, business, interest, rent, and social security payments. The income of nonrelatives living in the household is excluded, but the income of all family members 14 years old and over, including those temporarily living away, is included. Family income refers to receipts over a 12-month period.

Income for families from which no income information was obtained (about 5 percent of families) was imputed by using a sequential hot deck procedure. This is a procedure in which a non-respondent on an item is matched in the data set with a respondent on the same item. The nonrespondent's data is then filled in (imputed) by the respondent's data. The matched respondent is called the donor. A total of 200 imputation classes were created for the initial matching procedure—5 levels of the age of head of household, by 5 levels of the education of the head of household, by 2 levels for the employment status of the head of household, and by 4 levels of the number of workers in the household. To minimize the multiple use of a single donor, up to five donors were placed in each imputation class. A donor was selected at random from these five donors when a family with missing income information was encountered. In a few instances (about 10 of 50,000 families in each year), an imputation class had no donors, but a family from the class with missing income information was encountered. In these cases, a donor was selected by collapsing similar classes until a nonempty imputation class was created.

To help make comparisons over time, the categorical family income information was transformed into a continuous family income variable. The transformation was accomplished by randomly assigning an income value for each family from the income interval to which its income belonged. For intervals below the median, a rectangular probability density function was used; for those above the median, a Pareto probability density function was used.[32] The methodology has a feature that if the continuous family income variable were transformed back to a categorical family income variable, the value for each family would be identical to the original data. Based on the continuous family income variable, a family income percentile variable was calculated for each person in the survey that represents that person's position in the family income distribution. For example, if 25 percent of all persons have a lower value of family income (and 75 percent have a higher value), then the young adult's family income percentile variable has a value of 25. The methodology gives all persons in the same household the same value of both the categorical and continuous versions of family income.

[32] The rectangular distribution assumes that income level is evenly distributed as the number of persons decreases at the lower end of the income distribution. The Pareto distribution assumes that at the high end of the income distribution there is a linear relationship between proportional increases in income and proportional decreases in the number of persons.

There are several issues that affect the interpretation of dropout rates by family income using the CPS. First, it is possible that the family income of the students at the time they dropped out was somewhat different from their family income at the time of the CPS interview. Furthermore, family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent in the October CPS. In some cases, there are persons 15 through 24 years old living in the household who are unrelated to the household respondent, yet whose family income is defined as the income of the family of the household respondent. Therefore, the current household income of the respondent may not accurately reflect that person's family background. In particular, some of the young adults in the 15- through 24-year age range do not live in a family unit with a parent present.

An analysis of 1997 event dropout rates by family income and family status (presence of parent in the household) indicates whether including youth not living with at least one parent introduces any bias into the analysis of dropout rates by family income (table D5). About 10 percent of 15- through 24-year-olds enrolled in high school in the previous year were not living with a parent, and the percentage was much higher for students from low-income households than for those from middle- and high-income households. The event dropout rate was lower for those with at least one parent in the household than for those not living with a parent. This was true for all 15- through 24-year-olds as well as within each category of household income. The dropout rate for those with at least one parent in the household was 82 to 83 percent of the dropout rate for all 15- through 24-year-olds within each of the three categories of household income. As a result, despite the fact that a much higher proportion of students in low-income households did not reside with a parent, the relative relationships among dropout rates for the three income groups were similar for those with a parent in the household to those for all 15- through 24-year-olds. Specifically, the event dropout rate for those from low-income households was about three times higher than for those from middle-income households and seven times higher than for those from high-income households, both among all 15- through 24-year-olds and among those residing with at least one parent.

Table D5.—Percentage distribution of event dropouts for 15- through 24-year-olds according to household type, by family income: October 1997

Characteristics	Percent			Event rate (percent)		
	Total	Parent in home	No parent in home	Total	Parent in home	No parent in home
Estimate						
Total	100.0	90.1	9.9	4.6	3.5	14.0
Low income	100.0	67.5	32.5	12.3	10.1	17.0
Middle income	100.0	91.8	8.2	4.1	3.4	11.6
High income	100.0	97.2	2.8	1.8	1.5	10.3
Standard error						
Total	†	0.09	0.09	0.32	1.33	0.56
Low income	†	0.40	0.40	1.36	2.18	1.89
Middle income	†	0.12	0.12	0.41	1.31	0.69
High income	†	0.10	0.10	0.37	2.06	0.87

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 1997.

Definition of Geographic Regions in CPS

There are four Census regions used in this report: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. The Northeast consists of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The Midwest consists of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. The South consists of Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. The West consists of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Definition of Immigration Status in CPS

Immigration status was derived from a variable on the control card inquiring about the citizenship status of the reference person, with the following response categories:

1 = Native, born in the United States
2 = Native, born in Puerto Rico or U.S. outlying area
3 = Native, born abroad of American parent or parents
4 = Foreign-born, U.S. citizen by naturalization
5 = Foreign-born, not a citizen of the United States

Those coded (1) above (Native, born in the United States) were categorized as born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia. All others were categorized as born elsewhere. (In 1997, approximately 1.0 percent of both Hispanic 16- through 24-year-olds, and all persons in this age group were born abroad to American parents.)

Imputation for Item Nonresponse

For many key items in the October CPS, the U.S. Census Bureau imputes data for cases with missing data due to item nonresponse. However, item nonresponse data for the method of high school completion were not imputed by the Census Bureau before 1997. Special imputations were conducted for these items using a sequential hot deck procedure implemented through the PROC IMPUTE computer program developed by the American Institutes for Research.[33] Three categories of age, two categories of race, two categories of sex, and two categories of citizenship were used as imputation cells.

[33]D. H. McLaughlin, *Imputation for Non-Response Adjustment* (Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, October 1994).

Accuracy of Estimates

Most of the estimates in this report are derived from samples and are subject to two broad classes of error—sampling and nonsampling error. Sampling errors occur because the data are collected from a sample of a population rather than from the entire population. Estimates based on a sample will differ somewhat from the values that would have been obtained from a universe survey using the same instruments, instructions, and procedures. Nonsampling errors come from a variety of sources and affect all types of surveys, universe as well as sample surveys. Examples of sources of nonsampling error include design, reporting, and processing errors and errors due to nonresponse. The effects of nonsampling errors are more difficult to evaluate than those that result from sampling variability. As much as possible, procedures are built into surveys in order to minimize nonsampling errors.

In reporting sample survey data, estimates based on unweighted sample sizes less than 30 are not displayed. The standard error is a measure of the variability due to sampling when estimating a parameter. It indicates how much variance there is in the population of possible estimates of a parameter for a given sample size. Standard errors can be used as a measure of the precision expected from a particular sample. The probability that a complete census would differ from the sample by less than the standard error is about 68 out of 100. The chances that the difference would be less than 1.65 times the standard error are about 90 out of 100; that the difference would be less than 1.96 times the standard error, about 95 out of 100.

Standard errors for percentages and number of persons based on CPS data were calculated using the following formulas:

Percentage:

$$se = \sqrt{(b / N)(p)(100 - p)}$$

where p = the percentage ($0 < p < 100$),
N = the population on which the percentage is based, and
b = the parameter associated with the characteristic;
b is equal to 2,369 for the total or White population; 2,680 for the Black population; and 3,051 for the Hispanic population ages 14 through 24 for 1999.

Number of persons:

$$se = \sqrt{(bx)(1 - x / T)}$$

where x = the number of persons (i.e., dropouts),
T = population in the category (i.e., Blacks ages 16 through 24), and
b = as above.

Standard errors for the estimates in the tables appear in appendix A.

Response Rates

For the October 2000 core CPS, the unweighted response rate was 93 percent, and the response rate for the school supplement was 90 percent.

Methodology and Statistical Procedures

The comparisons in the text have all been tested for statistical significance to ensure that the differences are larger than those that might be expected due to sampling variation. Two types of comparisons have been made in the text.

Differences in two estimated percentages. The Student's *t* statistic can be used to test the likelihood that the differences between two percentages are larger than would be expected by sampling error.

$$t = \frac{P_1 - P_2}{\sqrt{se_1^2 + se_2^2}}$$

where P_1 and P_2 are the estimates to be compared and se_1 and se_2 are their corresponding standard errors.

As the number of comparisons on the same set of data increases, the likelihood that the *t* value for at least one of the comparisons will exceed 1.96 simply due to sampling error increases. For a single comparison, there is a 5 percent chance that the *t* value will exceed 1.96 due to sampling error. For five tests, the risk of getting at least one *t* value that high increases to 23 percent, and for 20 comparisons, to 64 percent.

One way to compensate for this danger when making multiple comparisons is to adjust the alpha level to take into account the number of comparisons being made. The alpha rate is the probability of falsely rejecting the hypothesis that there are no differences between groups in the population. For example, rather than establishing an alpha level of 0.05 for a single comparison, the alpha level is set to ensure that the likelihood is less than 0.05 that the *t* value for any of the comparisons exceeds the critical value by chance alone when there are truly no differences for any of the comparisons. One such adjustment, the Bonferroni adjustment used here, is calculated by taking the desired alpha level and dividing it by the number of possible comparisons, based on the variable(s) being compared. The *t* value corresponding to the revised, lower alpha level must be exceeded in order for any of the comparisons to be considered significant. For example, to test for differences in dropout rates among Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians/Pacific Islanders, the following steps would be taken:

- Establish the number of comparisons—in this case, six (Whites and Blacks; Whites and Hispanics; Whites and Asians/Pacific Islanders; Blacks and Hispanics; Blacks and Asians/Pacific Islanders; Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders). The number of two-way comparisons that can be made equals [(n)(n-

1)]/2, where n is the number of variable categories. Thus, with four categories the number of possible comparisons is [(4)(3)]/2=6.

- Divide the desired alpha level, 0.05, by the number of comparisons (e.g., 6) to obtain the new alpha level (0.05/6=0.0083).

- Consult a table of *t* statistics (or the standard normal table for *z* values if the N is large) to find the *t* value that corresponds to that alpha (*t*=2.64 for alpha=0.0083).

All comparisons in this report were tested using the Bonferroni adjustment for the *t* tests. Where categories of two variables were involved, the number of comparisons used to make the Bonferroni adjustment was based on the relationship(s) being tested.

Trends. Regression analysis was used to test for trends across age groups and over time. Regression analysis assesses the degree to which one variable (the dependent variable) is related to a set of other variables (the independent variables). The estimation procedure most commonly used in regression analysis is ordinary least squares (OLS).

The analyses in this report were conducted on the event rates, status rates, and completion rates. The event rate and status rate estimates were used as dependent measures in the analysis, with a variable representing time and a dummy variable controlling for changes in the educational attainment item in 1992 (=0 for years 1968 to 1991, =1 for 1992 to 2000) used as independent variables. However, in these data, some of the observations were less reliable than others (i.e., some years' standard errors were larger than those for other years). In such cases, OLS estimation procedures do not apply, and it is necessary to modify the regression procedures to obtain unbiased regression parameters.

The modification that is usually recommended transforms the observations to variables that satisfy the usual assumptions of ordinary least squares regression and then applies the usual OLS analysis to these variables. This was done in this analysis using the data manipulation and regression capability of Microsoft EXCEL®. Each variable in the analysis was transformed by dividing by the standard error of the relevant year's rate (event, status, or completion). The new dependent variable was then regressed on the new time variable and new editing-change dummy variable. All statements about trend changes in this report are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

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